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The impudent dreamer;
the story of Tubby
1953.

THE IMPUDENT DREAMER

the

Story of Tubby Clayton

With proud thanksgiving let us remember
our Elder Brethren

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left
grow old:*

*Age shall not weary them, nor the years
condemn.*

*At the going down of the sun and in the
morning*

We will remember them.

Laurence Binyon *For the Fallen*



TUBBY CLAYTON

THE IMPUDENT DREAMER

the

Story of Tubby Clayton

. . who had the impudence
to believe that under God's
hand, he could make dreams
come true

by

MELVILLE HARCOURT

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This Book is affectionately
dedicated to
Kenneth Escott Kirk, D.D.

PREFACE

PHILIP BYARD CLAYTON, more familiarly known to his generation as Tubby, is no easy subject for a biographer. He is rather like an artist's model who not only refuses to remain motionless but persistently questions the reasonability of making the portrait at all. When it was first pointed out to him that he was one of the significant figures on the world stage of the last thirty years, and that his personal story should be told, his reply was discouraging, to say the least; but when it was further added that the saga of his life might conceivably benefit the cause for which he had so doggedly striven his attitude became more temperate. Himself he ignores but never Toc H, and for the advancement of the Movement, and its numerous interests, he will, whenever possible, conscript anyone and everything.

He is, in many ways, an example of life's irony. He detests the limelight and yet the greater part of his career has been passed beneath its searching rays; he reverences the intimate affection of the family circle and yet Fate, while giving him a Family of tens of thousands, has denied him a hearth of his own; he is by cast of mind a scholar-poet well suited to the cloistered regimen of a University don but by temperament he is an Elizabethan who would turn any university upside down in a matter of weeks. It is, in fact, his Elizabethan temperament that has kept him for a quarter of a century galloping around the globe as if it were his own back garden. His is a difficult personality to transpose to paper and one always has the feeling that, at any moment, he will dash away, leaving the poor author with his pen dangling hopelessly in the air.

There were two further difficulties. Tubby and the World

PREFACE

Movement called Toc H are actually inseparable. Without Tubby, of course, there would have been no Toc H, and without Toc H it is perhaps not too much to say that P.B.C.'s character might have been differently shaped. The problem, therefore, that confronts any writer of his life is to retrieve his personality from the mazes of the Movement while, at the same time, according Toc H its rightful place in the evolution of his career and character. Whether I have succeeded is for the reader to judge. The second difficulty was even more formidable. For many years careful records of Tubby's life and activities were filed at All Hallows, Great Tower Hill, comprising a mine of invaluable memorabilia; this, alas, was destroyed with the Church on that fearful night in 1941. Thus it came about that I relied most heavily upon some of Tubby's intimate friends to supply facts whose details had been lost in the ashes. Tubby, overcoming his initial reluctance, generously supplied whatever I wanted that he happened to have on hand, but without the assistance of his "complicated series of friends" I can say, quite frankly, this book could never have been written.

With typical Toc H open-handedness they placed at my disposal diaries, letters, articles, etc., with full permission to use them in whatever way I thought fit; in each case their sole desire was to see recorded, as effectively as possible, the story of Tubby's unorthodox life—beyond that they were content with anonymity. But I could never permit this book to come before the public without expressing my deep sense of gratitude to Dr. Noel (Jock) Gillespie, Associate Professor of Anaesthesia in the University of Wisconsin, Dr. Leonard Browne, the Very Rev. Pat. Leonard, Provost of St. Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow, the Rev. Jonathan Graham of the Community of the Resurrection, the Rev. Stanley Clapham, the Rev. John Richardson (companions with Tubby in the South American Tour), the Rev. Gordon Lawes, Barclay Baron, O.B.E., and also the numerous aides and others who have worked with him over the years and whose remarks and impressions have helped in the formation of this book. Also I would like

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to thank Dr. Powel Mills Dawley, Professor of Ecclesiastical History of the General Theological Seminary for wise advice.

Tubby, as you will see, is really a Christian in a hurry. He has always been in a hurry, but never too hurried to speak to his fellow men. Indeed, his sole purpose was to speak to them in such a way that they too caught his infection of urgency and hurried about the Lord's business. If this book can help others to share something of Tubby's vision, his dreams and impudent enthusiasm for low men and high things it will have been worth the labour. For the rest, my main regret is that I was not better fitted for the task.

New York,
1952.

M. H.

INTRODUCTION

by His Grace the Archbishop of York

TUBBY has asked me, as his first and only vicar, to write a foreword to this biography. It was over forty years ago that he joined my staff of curates at Portsea. He was then a round and youthful figure, wearing great spectacles which gave an impression of wisdom and learning. I at once gave him charge of a large Bible Class and Club for boys between the ages of 16 and 20. A fortnight later, on a summer Sunday evening after church, I heard roars of laughter from the vicarage garden; on looking out of my window I saw Tubby surrounded by a great crowd of boys and young men, sitting on the grass or standing, while he was holding forth to them on a variety of subjects. From that time I had no doubt that he was superlatively good with lads and young men. Before long he knew individually every one of the lads who were in his Club and Bible Class; everything that concerned them was of interest to him, and in return they gave to him a loyalty and devotion which continued in a great many cases throughout their lives. When war broke out Tubby wanted to join up at once as a chaplain; unfortunately the then Chaplain-General gravely underestimated the urgent need of chaplains, so several months had to pass before he and several of his fellow curates were given the chance of going out to France as chaplains. Throughout the war Tubby kept in touch with the parish, always coming to it for a few days on his leaves.

It is never easy for a biographer when the subject of his book is still living. If he writes as a candid critic he may lose a valued friendship; but if he writes as an uncritical hero-worshipper he may cause discomfort to his subject and cynical amusement to the reader. The author of this book has followed the middle course:

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he has whole hearted admiration for Tubby, but he has not attempted to conceal his limitations. The story he tells is that of a man who saw visions, but who had the practical common sense to translate them into action, and to inspire others to help him in doing so.

Tubby has always had two dominating characteristics. First he concentrates with all his strength on whatever at the moment he has most in mind—it may be an archaeological problem, or ministering to lepers, or oil tankers, or the clearance of Tower Hill, or the rebuilding of All Hallows—this becomes of all-absorbing interest, and he must talk of it to everyone he meets to the exclusion of everything else. But always first and foremost in these enthusiasms is Toc H. To this everything else is subordinate, and no secondary interests are ever allowed to crowd it out. But, secondly, causes and movements never take the place of his care for individuals. This is where Tubby has excelled, and this is the quality which has gained him friends all over the world. He has a deep, genuine interest in individuals; his sympathy with them is boundless, and the person to whom he is talking feels that he is the one person above all others in whom Tubby is interested. This care for individuals draws out from them in response abiding friendship and trust.

This biography will enable those who have never known Tubby in the flesh to understand the secret of the influence he has over so many and the affection in which he is held by all who have met him. It will be welcomed by all members of Toc H, and also by many who have not the vaguest idea as to what is meant by Toc H, but who have frequently heard the name of Tubby Clayton, and who wish to know more about him. Here in this book they will find an interesting and well written account of his life and work.

CYRIL EBOR.

May, 1952.

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CHAPTER I

THERE is a tall white house in a Belgian town that holds the key to a man's life. It stands, No. 16, on the Rue de l'Hôpital, Poperinghe, a narrow arching thoroughfare that runs into La Grande Place. The house is in no way distinctive, its plain façade being typical of the residence of a prosperous, middle-class Belgian, but its walls can tell a story of strange gallantry in this untidy century. It is largely the story of one man, Tubby Clayton, who arrived in Flanders towards the end of 1915 with the British Expeditionary Force. There were very few who suspected that the chunky figure in khaki with the clerical collar was anyone out of the ordinary. Yet, almost single-handed, he lighted a spirit in the sombre fields of Flanders that not only outlived the miseries of war but developed into a Movement that influenced a generation. It is quite possible that he prayed—although in a rather different sense from the poet—"Now, God be thanked Who has matched us with His hour," but the sharp poignancy of the hour, with all its tragic waste of young life, never ceased to haunt him.

Poperinghe at the time of his arrival was not a comfortable place. The front line was too near. Day after day battalions of youngsters swung through the streets on the way to the trenches. They were fresh from the schools and offices and factories, but as the war grew old the martial airs they had sung so jauntily became more mechanical and joyless. And if you managed to survive you would see them weeks, or maybe, months later trudge back into the town grim-faced and haggard, the song gone from their lips and eyes that told of sights not easily forgotten. As the gap between the front line and the old town narrowed the contrasts of war were tragically evident. Refugees jammed the highways in a desperate attempt to save their lives while the Allied armies marched past them to destroy life. Men were rational creatures one

moment and a hideous mass of mangled flesh the next. Street corners became turnings to eternity and things that had taken centuries to create were wiped out in a few minutes. Days and nights were lived in the uncertainty of sudden death or, worse still, permanent mutilation. To many it seemed the negation of all reason, a grim multiple of brutalism and heroism, the ridiculous and the sublime. Perhaps they were right but, at least, Poperinghe was the last glimpse of civilisation the men had before marching into hell, and the first if they ever returned. Yet life in the town was no picnic, especially for the few inhabitants whom stubbornness or sentiment kept from fleeing. M. Cœvoet Camerlynck was one of them. He stood it as long as he could, but when shells began dropping in the back garden of No. 16 Rue de l'Hôpital he sacrificed sentiment and got out.

It so happened that the Senior Chaplain of the 6th Division, Neville Talbot, arrived in Poperinghe shortly before the departure of M. Camerlynck. For several months he had been searching for a house that could be used as Church and Club for the Sixth Division, and the discovery of No. 16 was a piece of rare good fortune. The Belgian refused to sell, but Talbot eventually persuaded him to let the Army "take over" for the duration; it was apparently an arrangement that appealed to M. Camerlynck's pocket as well as his patriotism. Anyhow, everyone was satisfied.

The Q.M.G., Colonel May (now General Sir Reginald May) paid an official visit and insisted that the house be named after Neville Talbot, but the padre objected so violently that the upshot was a compromise. It was named after his brother Gilbert, the youngest and most brilliant of the Bishop of Winchester's sons, who had been killed in action during the early months of the war. Much had been predicted for him. But while some who were present for the naming of the House may have felt that it was a monument to those who had died, there was one among them, Philip Clayton, who looked to the future, and thanked God that He had provided so generously for the present.

It has been said that G. K. Chesterton modelled some traits in the character of his famous sleuth, Father Brown, on that of his friend Philip Clayton, and there is no denying that a similarity exists. Whether the same deductive powers were possessed by each is

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questionable, but each was roundly stocky and twinkled with impish humour. Perhaps the similarity ended there for P.B.C.'s intuitive powers were more daring, and his whirlwind energy could have found no place in the physical economy of the good Father. He was universally known as "Tubby," a boyhood nickname it is true, but used with such affection by the troops that it was transformed into a title of honour—for the rotund cleric achieved a place that was unique and enviable in the dangerous society of the Western Front. Neville Talbot, whom he had known in his Oxford days, gave him the job of running Talbot House (its initials known in the language of the Morse Code as Toc H) as a hostel in a town full of troops; it was a mark of the man's genius that he injected into an ordinary wayside inn an atmosphere of purpose and gave to men of every class and rank a hint of qualities that had the texture of eternity.

Men were dying at the rate of two hundred and fifty a day, and they did so for four and a half years. They needed friendship, the warmth of a personal contact that could lift them above the squalid horror of the battlefields and give them a glimpse of sanity. Many of them found it in Tubby and the things of which he spoke with such good humoured assurance. He did not relish danger but he was not afraid of it, and he showed the younger fellows especially that "death is far from being the worst thing that can happen to a man." Wrapped in a greatcoat (sometimes sizes too large for it was not always his own) with horn-rimmed glasses bestowing a deceptive innocence on an impressive face, he would arrive at some battery position and announce to the commander that he had a guest for the night. Within two minutes the place was in an uproar, and even the proximity of shell-fire could do little to restrain the enthusiasm. His "slumming," as he called it, became a feature of Salient life, and a visit from Tubby did more for the morale of the troops than a hundred pep talks from the C.O.

The visits, of course, were as unpredictable as the man himself and where next he would pop up was anybody's guess. One thing was certain, he refused to be confined to Talbot House but followed his men about doing "what he could to share the dangers and hardships of his customers." And yet although his "peculiar

parish" extended as far as the first available transport could carry him, whether to the front line or to some bored sentry post, the troops identified his personality with Talbot House, and there is no doubt that the Inn-Keeper had put something of his soul into the inn.

Mud and blood are not a pleasant combination, and there was so much of it in Flanders that anything became beautiful by comparison. Certainly the old house acquired a more than earthly beauty in the eyes of men who had not seen a bed for months, and the Inn-Keeper, in writing home, talked lovingly of the "beautiful house with its lovely garden, full of standard roses, pergolas, wall fruit, and a chicken run." Almost everyone who fought in the Salient made their way, sooner or later, to the house and, having once passed the door, there were few who did not tread the narrow stairs that led to the Upper Room, an attic which Tubby had converted into a chapel. There in the hallowed calm could be found men wearing the uniform of a dozen nations. Some were mere boys who scarcely knew what it was all about, others had lived a great part of their lives, dangerously or placidly as Fate had decreed; but in the Upper Room they were all one, knit in the mysterious bonds of suffering and hope. You would find them there at all hours, but at specified times the Inn-Keeper would administer the Common Meal at the simple altar, a carpenter's bench retrieved from the garden, with its white and blue frontal.

It is difficult to explain but many have testified that the sight of Tubby standing before the altar was itself a spiritual experience. A few hours before, as they well knew, he might have been leading a hilarious sing-song in a battery outpost that was under fire or burying a bloody boy or writing a difficult letter to a parent or arranging some concert or just making fellows cheerful. But at the altar the sight of the bowed head and unhurried gestures, the sound of the familiar voice with its distinctive timbre evoked the very spirit of Christ. Men to whom cynicism came easier than religion felt the reality of his faith, and having climbed to the Upper Room out of curiosity, or to get away from the crowd, sensed the secret of his power.

It was in Talbot House that men learned the truth of a remark made by Tubby in a letter to England that "war, with its many

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horrors, can evoke, like all forms of disaster, human worth, which ease and prosperity at least obscure." Whether in the club rooms or the chapel he reminded the troops that they were men, individuals, not just parts of a huge destructive machine. And it was only as each man acted like a brother that universal brotherhood could be achieved, and the commonest adventures of living acquire significance.

It was a simple gospel, but when cleverness was blowing the globe to smithereens it was very attractive. If we search for an explanation of Tubby Clayton's later achievements I think it is to be found mainly in the fact that amid all the horror and misery, the humour and pathos of those Flanders days, he believed so intensely in the ideal of brotherhood that he surrendered completely to the directive Spirit from Whom comes all brotherhood.

* * *

He was the product of a family whose members were occasionally eccentric but seldom dull. Its origins are to be found in the North of England in the early sixteenth century, but it gradually spread to most parts of the Kingdom, and produced a curious assortment of sailors, merchants, politicians, and maiden aunts. By no means the least exhilarating of these was Captain Sir Thomas Byard, whose family had united with the Claytons at Burton. His men adored him as much as he was feared by the King's enemies at sea, and when young Horatio Nelson was still a cadet the nation was acclaiming Brave Byard's virtues in popular ballads:

"Brave Byard, the glory of Burton was there,
Who, like Jervis, his countryman, never knew fear.
The first broadside he gave, the Dutch fleets were all cleared
For he fought like a tar of Old England! Hurrah!"

An air of adventure envelops even the family portrait of this tough old salt who died, says legend, of a broken heart because they would not let him fight again.

It was a pity Old Sheppard of Frome never knew Brave Byard. They had much in common. Apart from the affinity of blood—

they were cousins—there was the same stubborn courage in the face of opposition, moral or physical. Returned to Parliament after the Reform Bill in 1832, he was too astute politically to resist the tendencies of his day, but his scorn for the new apostles of liberty was shown in his attitude to changing manners. He not only retained the correctness of the eighteenth century in his personal exchanges but persisted in wearing the outmoded peruke!

Each session of the House witnessed the same little drama. A spanking four-in-hand would draw up before the Houses of Parliament at Westminster and from the landau alighted a figure so incredibly impressive in peruke and knee-breeches that the crowd would be instantly silenced. Deliberately, disdainfully, Sheppard of Frome walked to the entrance while the bystanders gaped at the vision from another century. Within the lobbies the hum of conversation would be transmuted into inaudible admiration as the old man, gaunt and imperious, made his way to the chamber where, once seated, he would promptly fall asleep. But it was not the sleep of old age: it was the slumber of contempt. Dreams, after all, were preferable to unprincipled bores.

The Sheppards and the Byards and the Claytons were closely related for over two hundred years and branches of the respective families penetrated to many parts of the kingdom. Although the Claytons originated in the vicinity of Newcastle, members of the family were living on Tower Hill at the beginning of the seventeenth century. They were honest burghers, comporting themselves with propriety; but propriety was never allowed to interfere with business. The family business of naval supplies prospered exceedingly, and the Claytons thanked God in the pews of All Hallows Berkyngeschirche By-the-Tower, without, it is supposed, the satisfying foreknowledge that one of their descendants would become its most famous vicar.

While England agonised in civil war and convalesced under the Commonwealth the Claytons were careful to apply the Cromwellian precept ("Trust in God, and keep your powder dry") to business—in other words, they trusted in God, and kept their mouths shut. They succeeded so well that when Charles II returned from his wanderings Samuel Clayton was presiding

over a comfortable concern. The King quickly made his acquaintance after he became Lord Mayor of London. Perhaps it was the Mayor's personal charm that attracted His Majesty, but the cynical are inclined to suspect his wealth. Success, it is pleasant to relate, did not vulgarise the soul of Sir Samuel Clayton. He was never more happy than when in the company of his family or wandering through the lush meadows of the estate he had acquired in the old royal demesne of Enfield Park.

Generations of Claytons lived and died at Forty Hall, Enfield Park, until the year 1839 when the owners of that time, the Misses Charlotte and Emily Clayton, decided to dispose of the property. They were, by all accounts, an extraordinarily prim pair, and not the least of the many qualities that made up their angular refinement was a sense of responsibility, proprietary and exact. It was this sense of responsibility which on a certain night in the year 1839 impelled the old ladies to examine carefully an exquisite miniature of Nell Gwynne with five talc dresses that were interchangeable.

This amatory keepsake had been given to Sir Samuel Clayton (and remained in his keeping) by King Charles II when His Majesty was in need of funds. The miniature was contained in an elaborate green hide case of unusually large dimensions. One of the sisters, removing the case to a better light, accidentally touched a secret lid which flew open to reveal an inner compartment in which was a heap of letters. Now the Misses Clayton did not read other people's letters; and besides being acquainted with the history of the case they knew something about Charles II, and they suspected a lot more. Obviously, they were love letters. What else could they be? And so, without ado, they flung them into the fire.

In the drawing-room fire of Forty Hall that night there perished the letters which had lain concealed for nearly two hundred years and which historians would have given a fortune to possess. The love letters of Nell Gwynne to Charles II! The miniature with the talc dresses and the green case are now in the Victoria and Albert Museum. An atmosphere, I am quite sure, sweet Nellie would have thought rather restrictive.

The Squarson of Farnborough Rectory in Hampshire shared

few of the views of his sisters of Forty Hall, and their occasional asperities he neutralised with an urbanity that charmed parishioners and relatives alike. Farnborough was a picturesque village in the county of Hampshire, and the Rev. Samuel Clayton, as the Squarson, was naturally the most considerable personality in local affairs. The rule from the Parsonage, however, was wise and beneficent. It was a time when piety not infrequently smothered common sense, but Samuel Clayton's sense of humour was too strong for that to happen at the Rectory. After all, there were four boys and in a household where animal spirits were more often evident than sanctimony it was circumspect to effect some sort of union between heaven and earth.

The oldest of his four sons was Reginald who became Tubby's father. He, with his three brothers, was sent to Marlborough College shortly after the foundation of the school in 1843. Marlborough, of course, was modelled on the older public schools and, at the time, included all their advantages without excluding the abuses. And when the boys finally rose in rebellion against the bad food and harsh discipline young Clayton was one of the guiding spirits. For three days and three nights the boys of Marlborough—in what came to be known in the school annals as the Great Rebellion—defied the authorities. They resisted pleas, threats, cajolery, and open assault. In desperation the school authorities invoked the assistance of the local peelers (early police) who came plodding to the attack to be met by the missiles and derisive cheers of the rebels.

The family conference at Farnborough Rectory shortly afterwards did not concern Reginald's part in the rebellion but his health. He had become seriously ill with brain fever, and the doctors were emphatic that the strain of further study was out of the question. A change of climate was recommended—it always is in England—and someone thought of Queensland in Northern Australia which was then being pioneered. The boy's enthusiasm was only modified by one thing—his affection for his cousin, Isabel Sheppard, whom he would have to leave. There in the Rectory garden a coin was broken, a lucky sixpence—Reginald's and Isabel's pledge of undying fidelity. He was sixteen, she twelve.

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The Northern Australia of Clayton's day was a crude, untidy land in which heat and flies and sand and hard work competed for the mastery. Life was harsh and appallingly frank. A parson's son from an English shire could scarcely be blamed for detecting a resemblance between his new home and the place his father had so frequently declared was the fate of the godless. But he worked so efficiently that within ten years he had risen from a cadetship to ownership (with, of course, the aid of the patrimony he received at twenty-one). Nevertheless, such success in such a land required guts and intelligence and he proved he had both.

Ten years in the Australian backblocks not only trim the edges off a man, they make him thrifty and cautious. If he was going to claim a bride—for the time had now come to fulfil his promise—he was going to do it in his own way, and that way did not include passenger ships and the customary ports. Apart from the boredom involved there was the quite unnecessary expense, both of which could be avoided by the simple alternative of signing on as a deck hand. He loved ships and, with reservations, the men that sailed them; an attitude of mind he regarded as sufficient to ensure success at sea. But when the *Star of Peace* spread her sails and ploughed past the Sydney Heads she slipped from the ken of the world. Some months later the Farnborough Rectory was shocked to receive the news that the ship was presumed lost at sea.

The news of Reggie's death developed in the Rector of Farnborough the habit of walking alone, sometimes for hours at a time. It was one summer evening while pacing the Rectory lawn that the old man turned to observe a figure, oddly familiar, swing through the gate and break into a run.

"Reggie. My son, my son!"

It was indeed he, but a very different person from the one who had left England. Older and bigger, unshaven and dishevelled, an apparition whose disreputableness was completely forgotten in the wonder of the moment.

For seven months the *Star of Peace* had been buffeted and becalmed, slashed by typhoons or thrown off her course as she struggled through half the world's seas. Finally, but not unexpectedly, food and fuel ran desperately short. Clayton's money was in Queensland and London banks, and his arrival in England

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found him without a penny in his pockets. But he was not embarrassed. He boarded a train and, having no ticket, climbed into a coal truck in which he rode down to Hampshire.

Breaking away from his son the Rector strode to the church and commenced tugging the bell. As the deep-throated peals shattered the silence agitated villagers, smocks flying in the air and pitchforks held aloft, came running through the gate and over the lawns.

"Reggie is home. He's come back," shouted the Rector laughing and excited. "Let us give thanks to God. This is a wonderful day."

It certainly was. And so were the weeks that followed. After ten years Reginald Clayton fulfilled his boyhood promise. He was married, in the presence of the respective families, to his cousin Isabel Sheppard in Somerset. Shortly afterwards the couple embarked for Queensland. That same year the German armies entered Paris.

To a young English bride the years that followed may have been difficult, at times lonely, how lonely nobody will ever know, but they were not uninteresting. She managed her home, bore her children and, gradually, responded to that land of limitless horizons with an affection that never really left her. On December 12, 1885, she gave birth to her youngest child, Philip Thomas Byard Clayton who, in later life, became known to his generation as "Tubby."

CHAPTER II

TUBBY tells us that he first crossed the world on a pillow. He really had no choice in the matter seeing that his parents decided that the confinement of a pillow was preferable to a year-old infant tumbling about the decks of a ship. In their anxiety, however, to protect their youngest child—known to the passengers as “The Golden Nugget”—they were probably unaware that they were conferring upon him a peculiar moral advantage. After all, one cannot deny that there is something irresistible about a person who possesses a spiritual kinship with the magic carpet of Tangu: and the elfin quality that occasionally transforms the personality of Tubby, his reverence for antiquity that can burgeon into the most extravagant phantasies may have their roots in the psychology if not the puissant magic of that pillow. At least it is a suggestive theme.

But the Claytons, being practical people, were more concerned with the problem of their children's education. The wide open spaces had their advantages but, in an age that was becoming increasingly competitive, they considered bulky biceps an indifferent compensation for ill-trained minds. They resolved to visit England (the year was 1886) which would enable them to make arrangements for schooling and also to escape from one of the worst and longest droughts in the history of Northern Australia.

For an overseas visitor with money in his pocket life could then be very pleasant: without money it could be as offensive as elsewhere. The Claytons, with eight hundred pounds in their pockets, and twenty-five thousand in the Queensland banks, had no need to worry. Besides, the genteel distractions of Victorian society did not encourage pessimism—the plays, the parties, the parks, the whole delicious round of opulent pleasure was insidiously attractive after years in a primitive colony.

It was a pity the pleasures ceased so soon. News reached England that the Queensland drought had broken with torrential rains that flooded immense areas and completed the ruin of the previous years. Nor was that all. The colonists lost their savings. Local banks failed. Many were ruined, including Tubby's father who, at the age of over forty, was left without a penny except for the eight hundred pounds that had been reserved for the "family holiday."

He was a man not easily defeated. He took stock of his position. Clearly a man of forty-two, lacking the temperamental resilience of youth and burdened with a growing family, was too meagrely equipped to tackle again the hardships and endure the disappointments of pioneering life. Success achieved once might be more elusive a second time—one could never tell. Far better to forget Australia and try English commerce. It was a wise decision. Twenty years after entering the City with the "family holiday fund" he was in a position to retire on an income of two thousand pounds a year which, in that blessed era of stable economy, was easily worth five times the equivalent today.

For his wife, Isabel, however, those years cannot be dismissed with just a few lines and a bow to success. If her difficulties had been considerable in Queensland, they were no less exacting in London although, naturally, encountered upon a different level of experience. She had been born to affluence, and after marriage to her cousin had not anticipated nor experienced any alteration in her mode of living. At the age of thirty-eight she had much to be thankful for. Life had its anxieties, of course, but also the compensations that only health and security can yield. There were the excitements of the home, plans for the children's futures, prospects of travel, avenues of adventure that stretched in all directions in that gay, carefree year of 1886. And then, with the suddenness of a thunderbolt, the blow fell. She stood with her husband in the midst of their young family stripped of almost every penny, facing a future that was both unknown and uncertain, impressed by compulsions that were unfamiliar. Nevertheless her spirit did not falter. She walked with her husband into the City of London as she walked with him into the wilds of Queensland and, in each case, her faith was rewarded, although only the

Recording Angel knows the trials which those first years in London imposed upon her pluck and ingenuity.

The suburb of Fulham in which she and her family settled owed its importance to Fulham Palace, the residence of the Bishop of London. It still retained in those days a rural atmosphere and the arrival of the Claytons was viewed suspiciously. But even if five high-spirited youngsters had not disrupted the sanctity of Edith Road there is no doubt the character of their mother would have soon attracted attention.

Gathering her skirts imperiously around her the compact figure of Mrs. Clayton, remarkably like that of the reigning Queen Victoria, became a familiar sight as she walked to St. Andrew's Church or upon some daily domestic errand. There was never an actual want of food in those early Fulham days, but there was often a desperate need of money; and adolescent appetites, she discovered, are indifferent to economics even if clothes, beneath deft fingers, can occasionally be made to adapt themselves.

However she was always optimistic. The problem of the children's education was solved characteristically. She began by instructing them herself. An accomplished linguist, she also held very definite ideas about education and it was no mere chance that when the boys eventually entered Colet Court they stood high in their forms. They never forgot her practical interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan during a Fulham coal strike.

Their mother, who was a "District Visitor", with responsibility for the welfare of her poorer neighbours, walked briskly to the nearest coal-yard. Giant coal-heavers lounged at the gates, horses munched and clattered in the stalls and loaded carts filled the yard with upturned shafts. Walking straight into the midst of this confused idleness, Isabel Clayton led two horses from the stables, harnessed them, backed them into a cart, mounted the driver's seat with tightly held skirts, cracked the whip and rumbled competently through the gate—her tiny figure exuding such overpowering dignity that the astonished coalmen could only gape.

Flanked by a yelling army of small boys and not a few adults,

the coal cart proceeded on a task that very nearly assumed the proportions of a crusade. Each sack was weighed and signed for and the money placed in a tin that jingled on the floor of the cart. Some hours later the sulky coal-heavers watched the horses come through the gates at a trot. Not a word was said as the gentlewoman, the grime of her person in no way detracting from her self-possession, unharnessed the steaming pair. Having rubbed them down and stabled them, she placed the money and receipts at the office door, and then walked through the gate with an aplomb more fitted to a ballroom than a coal-yard. Half-hearted cheers broke from the coalmen—their grudging tribute to a piece of colossal impudence.

But a lesson had been taught to the children and, incidentally, to the coalmen too. The incident was closed. She never referred to it again. But the children remembered.

Yet she was not always unorthodox. In the matter of a religion she could be very correct, almost pietistic, although kindness and a strong sense of humour saved her from ever becoming objectionable. Speaking broadly, she managed to achieve that most difficult of feats—harmony between faith and works. During the first few years of his life Tubby was naturally unable to estimate the quality of the faith, but the reality of his mother's works was something that even a small boy could not escape. His early world seemed cluttered with the flounces and bustles of ageing ladies who disarmingly described themselves as members of the Girls' Friendly Society, and perhaps, in later life, the restraint he always experienced in the presence of women was due to a childish fixation. Few things are more awesome than a conclave of spinsters engaged in good works, and his mother in the President's chair did not lessen the fearsomeness of those occasions. Women, as far as he could make out, were the denizens of a strange world that revolved solely around tea-cups, mysterious wisps of millinery, giggles and gossip. It was all rather frightening to a young man of five or six years. The other large influence in those first years was still more magnificently terrifying—it was the side whiskers of the Lord Bishop of London!

There were those who insisted that Frederick Temple, Bishop

of London, took his evening walks with God and spent his leisure hours chastising his suffragans. His former pupils at Rugby declared the remark to be unexaggerated. As the Headmaster of Rugby he had been fearsome indeed, and in later life the boys of his day were not surprised to learn that he was the only man in the world who could intimidate Queen Victoria. There was a Gothic dignity about the man as he moved through the streets of Fulham. In later years Tubby fervently agreed with William Temple that "there was no one in the world more majestic than my father." But his associations with Billy and the Benson boys (sons of the Archbishop of Canterbury), disclosed the humanity of prelates as well as the ingenuity of their sons.

Billy Temple was not often seen in Edith Road. Fulham Palace was too remote behind its screen of official sanctity; but the school, Colet Court, afforded opportunities for friendship seldom available in the wider world. Billy Temple, as befitted a future occupant of the See of Canterbury, was Captain of the school and altogether "a most frightful blood": Philip Clayton, whose physical construction had already earned him the nickname of "Tubby," the merest junior. Billy strode gaily through the corridors of heaven, a crowd of admirers trailing behind him like a comet's tail: little Tubby watched wonderingly from the obscurity of the Lower School. Occasionally the mighty one would descend and engage the junior in conversation, not with an air of patronage, but with an easy confidence that developed into a life-long friendship.

It was during such conversations that Billy revealed the more human side of his Olympian sire. The Episode of the Underground, for instance, did more to bring Bishop Temple within the range of Tubby's imagination than a thousand reassurances from his elders.

It was one of those silver afternoons that occasionally transforms London's greyness into poetry when Frederick Temple, accompanied by his son William, entered an Underground station. The famous face was surmounted by a superb top hat, complete with flying buttresses, which even Billy had to admit seemed a trifle incongruous amid the spittle and sawdust of a third-class carriage. But such was the magic of that gleaming topper that

the whole carriage was suffused with a sense of destiny; few, at that moment, could have suspected that the massive brow and jutting chin which *Punch* found so hard to delineate concealed an impish desire to hurl the lordly headgear to the end of the furthest rack. How were humble souls to know that the Lord Bishop of London detested top hats as much as he preferred third-class carriages? Only the echo of his wife's voice sternly reminding him that nothing must happen to that most magnificent of hats restrained the impulse and, with a hand on each knee, he tried to contemplate the issues at stake in his first visit to the Lord Mayor at Mansion House. Billy sat in worshipful silence.

At the conclusion of the historic visit in which the Church had blessed the State and the State had suitably responded Billy and his father once more entered the Underground and boarded an appropriate train. The carriage was empty. It was a horse-box affair divided from its companion by a partition that stopped twelve inches short of the roof. His Lordship threw himself upon the seat, gave a joyous gurgle, whisked his hat from off his head, and sent it sailing towards the rack which hung invitingly against the low partition. But the gurgle dropped to a groan as the horrified eyes of father and son watched the topper sail over the partition and disappear into the next compartment.

An instant guilt seized the Temples. Their imaginations envisaged the wrath of Mrs. Temple and the fate of the hat; both gloomily agreed that no hat, much less that sacred headgear, could withstand such an unceremonious journey—*sic transit gloria* etc. etc.!

And then a most wonderful thing happened. There was a movement. Very slowly quite a different topper began to rise above the partition. Beneath the glossy symbol of superlative respectability appeared the face of its owner—china-blue eyes, pink cheeks, mutton-chop whiskers, a city gentleman no less, fresh from the pages of Dickens. He climbed on to the seat next door and raised his arm: his tie-pin gleamed, his cuff-links glinted expensively, his linen was spotless. This altogether admirable man stretched over the partition and, with the grace of a courtier to his liege-lord, proffered the delinquent topper, undamaged and unmarked. In a rich voice, reminiscent of good wine, he remarked,

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pointing to the strings on the hat, "An eminent ecclesiastic, I perceive."

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St. Paul's School was founded by John Colet in the year 1509 for the purpose of educating boys to "raise their little white hands in prayer for children of all nations." Colet Court was established over three hundred years later with motives that were less picturesque but equally laudable—to prepare boys to take their place in St. Paul's School. Some few boys from Colet Court passed into other public schools but the vast majority walked across the road and took their places in "the best Greek forms in England." On the whole the boys from Colet Court did well, much to the satisfaction of its founder James Bewsher whose brother, incidentally, was the Bursar at St. Paul's. By the time Billy Temple passed on to Rugby, young Clayton had not only accustomed himself to the new environment of the Big School, where his two brothers Jack and Hugh had preceded him, but had formed a curiously sensitive and enduring friendship with a lad named Cecil Rushton.

Cecil and Tubby were day-boys, drawn together by their conscious distinction from that droll genus "the boarder," united by a daily pilgrimage that carried them to school and sometimes, too, above the meagre London sun into the lambent realms of adventure. The small consorts met in the morning and returned in the afternoon "unkempt" said Tubby in later years "to the verge of infamy, each with a satchel loaded with the lower rungs of knowledge." None could share their epical extravagances and few the episodes of excitement.

Tubby entered St. Paul's School in the twilight of its golden age which, roughly speaking, had extended through the decade from 1887 to 1897 under the Headmastership of F. W. Walker. Walker was a remarkable man. As the Headmaster of Manchester Grammar School his methods, inimitably personal to say the least, had transformed it into one of the most progressive (and certainly the most discussed) schools in the kingdom. An educationalist of such stature could not long remain unnoticed. He was eventually invited by that august body, the Board of Governors

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of St. Paul's School, to wait upon them in London but to its dismay his shaggy personality completely dominated the interview. It was with unwonted diffidence that the Governors at last inquired as to his methods. The reply was superb.

"I just walk about, gentlemen," boomed the cobbler's son in heavy north-country accents. "I just walk about." The astonished Governors promptly appointed him to walk about St. Paul's which he did for many years with conspicuous success.

St. Paul's was a larger world than Colet Court, but as Tubby arrived with a scholarship his ability was acknowledged, and the fact that his brother Hugh had been Captain of the School predisposed the belligerent to regard the name of Clayton with tolerance. Even if St. Paul's, the first school in England to teach Greek, provided perhaps the best classical teaching of that day, there is no denying it also produced the most strenuous competition. It could boast of thirty-five first-class scholarships to Oxford and Cambridge besides four scholars at Balliol and three at Trinity, Cambridge; Tubby, young though he was, soon realised that he had taken his place in a field of mental race-horses.

Perhaps London itself did more to educate his mind than the masters at St. Paul's. There are souls that are irked by confinement, souls that move more freely, sometimes splendidly through the madding crowds; indeed, such a one was the school's eponymous saint, Paul, and the greatest of all Paulines, John Milton, had spoken of students being "deluded with ragged notions and bablements" when they had the right to expect "worthy and delightful knowledge." Tubby regarded classical iambs as worthy enough, but the knowledge culled from antique streets, the scraps of wisdom casually digested in second-hand shops or along the greasy thoroughfares of the waterfront were wholly delightful and, in later years, quite invaluable.

Cecil Rushton was an inquisitive companion in this intimate invasion of the capital. A restless spirit he loved to soar on the wings of chance: Tubby, in turn, had an Elizabethan contempt for baggage and the conventional routes. For two such the summer holidays became an annual challenge, a test of resourcefulness and, it may be added, an experiment in optimism. From the age of fifteen onwards the two Paulines would meet for

luncheon on the day of departure at the Cheshire Cheese which, by the way, was also a favourite haunt of Yeats, Arthur Symonds and other members of the Rhymers' Club. After a substantial meal they would set out armed with five pounds—and two very brisk imaginations. It was no haphazard adventure but an affair conforming to a particular strategy. Each of the London railway termini was visited in the event that a train would be leaving for the coast; if there were no train then, forbidden by their code to linger, the boys moved on to the next station. To board a train already in motion was singularly auspicious. Thenceforth, for one glorious fortnight, the world was at their feet and their spirits unchained as they sped towards the sea and beyond. It requires courage beyond the ordinary to plunge into a continent with the deliberate intention of not facing homewards until the funds are exhausted; but a high degree of resourcefulness never failed to return them to England.

For at least two boys at St. Paul's School the dry bones of geography sprang to life and arid text books were suddenly fertilised by names of mysterious beauty and actual experience . . . Lichtenstein . . . Scheveningen . . . Turnu Severino. The longest journey took the adventurers through a "motley medley of nationalities" to the borders of southern Russia: the shortest from Oulton Broad to Poole, delivering a 32 ft. cabined auxiliary to a purchaser.

Gilbert Keith Chesterton, who spoke from personal experience of St. Paul's, once remarked that "boys forget everything except their schoolmasters." Tubby could not afford the luxury of that Chestertonian epigram. Scholarships are not usually awarded for forgetfulness but, as Tubby could feelingly testify, for competence born of hard work. For four hours every night during term he would sit at his books, and the most conclusive testimony to his stamina is to be found in a sober financial fact—between them the two brothers, Tubby and Hugh, won scholarships amounting to four thousand pounds. Nevertheless, Tubby was not unmindful of his masters or his school-fellows. Who could ignore F. W. Walker? An overpowering presence whose eccentricities were almost as impressive as his erudition. Nor could Tubby ever forget the afternoon when "F.W." stormed into

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the room in which he and Dickie Walker, the Head's son, were comfortably relaxing.

"I've been insulted," thundered the vast north-country voice.

"Insulted, father," cried Dickie. "What on earth do you mean?"

"Insulted, son, that's what I mean. *Insulted!* I have joost met a miserable specimen of an Indian Army colonel. Do you know what he had the infernal cheek to ask me? He asked me if I thought my school was of good enough social standing to send his son."

"What did you say?"

"Say? I told him that if we condescended to accept his son at St. Paul's and the wretched boy had anything in him, we would try to forget his social origins."

It was not Tubby's first lesson in social perspectives, but it was one of the most memorable.

G. K. Chesterton, with no suggestion of his mature rotundity, was naturally less awesome than the Head, but the sparks of his witticisms fell brilliantly into the Lower School. And then there was E. C. Bentley, an admirable foil for Chesterton's shafts, whose mind moved in worlds apart, worlds, no doubt, populated with the characters that afterwards inhabited his books. But none of the Recent Old Paulines—then at Oxford—were closer to Tubby, with the exception of Cecil Rushton and his brother Hugh, than Charles William Brodribb who was to become Assistant Editor of the *London Times* and Editor of *The Times Literary Supplement*. Charles possessed the gentle wisdom which one associates with an Erasmus, an urbane intelligence that penetrated effortlessly to the heart of things. Beyond the circle moved others, some younger, many concealing unsuspected talents. . . . Otto Neimeyer whose financial wizardries were to confound his enemies and elate his friends, and a sharp-faced junior named Bernard Montgomery who afterwards distinguished himself at a place called El Alamein.

In actual fact, Tubby was not interested in being a schoolboy. He was one of those occasional souls that achieves mental adulthood with physical puberty. A boy who has read Spinoza at the age

of sixteen with some apprehension does not fit comfortably into juvenile patterns; his appraisal of life was astonishingly shrewd at an astonishingly early age. He was well aware of the merits of the form-room but never insensible to the lessons of the street. Scholarship, after all, is but a preface to action and Tubby's quick eye seldom failed to observe the movements of men—on the streets, in the tubes, through the pale curtain of an Embankment dusk. Whatsoever concerned men concerned him—a capital basis for the humanities, as Charles Brodribb was to show him.

It was Charles Brodribb, quietly eloquent, persistently patient, who escorted Tubby to the world of literature and taught him, perhaps more than anyone, to pick his way through its highways and byways with fine discernment. Tubby discovered, joyously, that his facility for expression led him into avenues of creation in which action and thought mingled entrancingly. Yet his was a rebel spirit and he quickly became interested in unusual magazines to which he often contributed and sometimes read. Even as a schoolboy he could be deliciously absurd, rioting in a world of make-believe, clowning with language but always in such a way that one rarely lost sight of the artist. It surprised no one when Tubby Clayton became the Assistant Editor of *The Pauline*.

It would be unfair to suggest that his position on *The Pauline* was in any way remarkable. He was competent, superlatively so, and, at times, surprisingly mature; but for many years, it must be remembered, *The Pauline* had been staffed by a succession of precocious youngsters, some of whom, like Chesterton, had attained real brilliance. What Tubby did was to relate humanity to academics, to inject the curious tensions of the mart into the unsophisticated superiority of the form-room, and in such a manner as to delight the boys without offending the masters (a *savoir-faire* he did not always exhibit in later life). But then a lad who could spend his vacations riding a tramp steamer in the North Sea or studying, first hand, the polity and social idiosyncrasies of the citizens of Liechtenstein or some equally obscure state can scarcely be expected to think, much less express himself, in the familiar categories.

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Towards the end of his time at St. Paul's the family built Little Hatchett, at Beaulieu in the New Forest, a house of discreet design that combined the advantages of the contemporary with the nostalgic charm of the past. On the hottest days shadows caressed the lawn and the whispering of the trees could be heard through the bedroom windows. While Isabel Clayton snipped flowers for the vases her husband would work with the gardener or, during the week-ends, watch through the haze of his pipe the boys and their friends slam their way through half a dozen sets of tennis.

Each Saturday during term the habits of the schoolboy were exchanged for the manners of the city man. His father's firm would acquire a new member, an office boy whose insatiable curiosity unravelled the intimacies of the head clerk's private life as breezily as it deciphered the complexities of the ledger book. Even in those days—which were the basis of his frequent remark that he “began life as an office boy”—there were indications of the energy, the almost ruthless drive that, so often, was to spare others as little as it spared himself; there was the consuming resourcefulness of the leader that could, and would, absorb people as well as things, that subordinated everything to the main purpose. His purpose apparently, even at that age, was to prove to his own satisfaction that the world of things was not irreconcilable with the conceptual world of the spirit. The best way to do it, of course, was to enter, in order to understand, the sphere of activity that was primarily concerned with the control of things—the sphere of industry.

A frequent visitor to Little Hatchett in those pre-war days was Cecil Rushton whose interests, it must be admitted, were mainly urban, but he enjoyed people so much that he was prepared to meet them on any terms and, usually, in any surroundings. He had the happy knack of being able to detach individuals from crowds. For him, from his schooldays to his early death, life was an unfolding drama whose characters provided amusement or imparted knowledge, but were seldom negative—that was a quality reserved for the inanimate. His periodic appearances at Beaulieu were eventful.

There was the incident of the garden well. Cecil gaily trundled

up the drive one Easter Monday in a rattling ruin of a car (called with sardonic discernment of its deficiencies, "Collapsible Charlie") which, by cantrips unknown, he had managed to coerce over the hundred miles that separated London from Beaulieu. The timing was perfect. The arrival was hideously announced precisely as the Clayton family sat down to breakfast. After the meal the problem of Cecil's temperament presented itself.

It was one of those flawless days which the unpredictable English climate sometimes transposes from summer to spring. The unexpected heat normally induces lethargy, but Mr. Clayton, knowing Cecil, prescribed the digging of a ten-foot well behind the tennis court. Cecil, whose indifference to tennis was only exceeded by his abhorrence of gardening, complied with enthusiasm. Dragging along a protesting Tubby, operations were commenced in a steadily mounting temperature, but an hour's hacking into ground congealed with the winter frosts convinced the perspiring Cecil that he had made a tactical blunder. However, it was not too late to recover. There were more modern ways of excavating earth than with spades after the manner of neolithic man. Ever heard of dynamite? Well, dynamite blew downwards and one was presented with a large hole in a matter of seconds. All that remained to be done was to clean up the debris. A fascinating experiment that had the dual merit of saving time and labour and thus permitting the operators to turn their attention to more intriguing pursuits.

Had Tubby any dynamite? No? In that case the most satisfactory procedure would be to visit three chemists and, having obtained the required constituents, compound their own dynamite. It was as easy as falling off a log. Vainly did Tubby plead that the nearest chemist was six miles away and, being a holiday, all shops would be shut. With equal fervour the young apostle for science argued that if the well were urgent then, *ipso facto*, the dynamite became a question of urgency too; in which case, they were fully justified in disturbing a chemist. The actual nature of the mission, of course, must not be disclosed.

The decadent automobile, impelled by the white magic of Cecil, laboured to Lyndhurst. After considerable knocking Cecil

and Tubby were grudgingly admitted to the twilight of a blind-drawn shop where they suavely inquired, under the plea of the most dire urgency, for constituent number one. Sorry, it was not in stock. Not in stock? No, it hadn't been for some time. The disconsolate Cecil slowly emerged from the shop and, amid a sequence of snorts and bangs, proceeded homewards.

The well, out of respect for his host, had now resolved itself into a question of honour and, therefore, of conscience. Cecil, as usual, placated his conscience (if not Tubby's feelings) in a paroxysm of the most violent energy. Far into the spring night, with a stable lantern blinking its frail beams above the pit, the two lads struggled down into the reluctant earth. At midnight they struck water and so, declared Tubby, saved themselves from death by exhaustion. Perched on the lip of the well they celebrated the completion of the task—which, but for Cecil's ingenuity, would have been finished by early afternoon—by consuming an indecently large quantity of sardines and biscuits. Supper over, "Collapsible Charlie," looking more ruinous than ever, disappeared into the darkness to deposit Cecil Rushton at Plaistow in time for work at 8 a.m.

On his seventieth birthday old Mr. Clayton assembled his three sons, Jack, Hugh, and Tubby, on the tennis court at Beaulieu. Each, he explained, would drive a peg into the court that would remain as a witness to their virility and a monument of the occasion. A birthday caprice that was indicative of the complex disposition of a man who was at once one of the heroes in Ralph Boldrewood's celebrated book *Robbery Under Arms* and an authority on the psalms all of which he could, and often did, recite by heart. It was no easy contest for the Claytons were all muscular specimens. Jack easily outdistanced his brothers who tied for second place; but Jack was far excelled by the old man who, in the magnificent vigour of seventy years, drove his peg twice as deep as any of the boys. It was an odd way to commemorate the birthday of an elderly gentleman but then the Claytons, in many ways, were an odd family.

The long days at Beaulieu with their teas and tennis and larks, with all the inconsequential behaviour of young people stood in stark contrast to a century already chilled with impending disaster.

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As if by divine sanction the golden period of Victorian imperialism closed majestically with the turn of the century: the elegance of the Edwardians was to be compromised by irritating crises—Morocco, Bosnia and suchlike—petty precursors of a vast global tragedy. On a private scale the advancing century brought the days of St. Paul's to an end and Tubby prepared to follow his elder brothers to Oxford.

CHAPTER III

IF sentiment died with the birth of the twentieth century, it was not long survived by graciousness. The frail thread that linked the new age to the unmechanised past grew more slender with each passing decade. It was the century of noise, an era of fierce febrile movement: strident monologues replaced reasoned conversation and political thinking degenerated into government by gesticulation. Quite obviously men had lost, or were fast losing, the art of serene living.

Even Oxford, traditionally aloof, could not wholly evade the new tensions. To all appearances she may have seemed undisturbed but the High, a sensitive gauge of temporal trends, was not the High that, only a few years before, had been walked by John Newman and his fellow Tractarians. When Philip Clayton went up to Exeter there were no longer figures, like the venerable Dr. Routh, whose memories very nearly extended back into the seventeenth century. It was said that John Keble used to call upon Dr. Routh who, in his boyhood, had known two old ladies in the town who had seen Charles II walk down Oxford High. And the Oxford of Keble, who died a mere forty years before Tubby arrived, was practically unchanged from the Oxford of the Carolines. Its misty spires, undarkened by soot from contiguous factories, looked down upon a High in which the thin-wheeled hansom cab had replaced the more cumbersome coach without, however, disturbing either the celerity or the dignity of the famous thoroughfare.

The first omen of change—apart from the Government University Reform Act of 1854—was the appearance of the bicycle. In the early stages it seemed harmless enough as, in numbers rarely more than two or three, it swayed uncertainly down the historic artery of Oxford life. The curiosity of the dons was restrained and the comments witty for few suspected the powers

of reproduction which lay behind those contraptions that so ingeniously accommodated the legs of daring freshmen. Within a few years they had multiplied into swarms whose unpredictable antics violated thought, threatened limb, and deprived even the pavements of safety. Yet worse was to come. The heart of History, Tubby declares, missed a beat at the honk of the first automobile rattling down the High. Today, apparently, there is little to choose between the Oxford High and Clerkenwell except, perhaps, one is noisier and the other dirtier.

But standing on the threshold of Oxford life Tubby decided to enjoy himself. Hugh had gone up to Wadham and galloped through everything, taking a double-first and a place among the top sixteen in the Indian Civil Service exams. Jack, too, had performed creditably at Brasenose, but neither example could alter Tubby's resolve to have "a good time." His formula was simple and characteristic—to see and do everything! An impossible feat; at least, to all but the very young. He was young enough to attempt it, yet sufficiently intelligent to see quickly the futility of it. After the first brave flutter he became selective in his pleasures with the result that, even today, he can recall with elation what were to him some of the "high moments" in his varsity career.

There was the exhilaration of the smoke-filled digs where self-confident undergraduates, with a fine display of all that they had ever read or learned, passionately affirmed or denied the great truths of creation—or cricket. The occasions, too, when he dropped in to hear the speeches of the Union, which were often ordinary but sometimes suggestive of brilliance, giving the speaker a reputation at Oxford he would probably spend years destroying in the House of Commons. Unforgettable, also, the exquisite sense of age in a nameless inn on the outskirts of the town where he learned to discriminate the qualities of cognac while his companion dilated ardently upon the merits of Catalonian literature and the sterility of eremites. And his desultory reading of history with a tow-haired young man from Queen's who persisted in reciting Villon in execrable French as he (Tubby) quaffed draughts of beer between puffs on a churchwarden pipe. . . . All very amusing but it probably cost him the humiliation of his Third Class in Classical Moderations.

It was personalities rather than books, or even ideas, that impressed Tubby. Oxford still glowed with the memory of that remarkable group of men, the Tractarians, whose zeal had revived the moribund body of Anglicanism and whose intellectual position had found expression in *Lux Mundi*, a book whose controversial passages could not detract from the fact that it stood in the great tradition of Anglican apologetic literature. The architects of this formidable vindication were the heirs of "Puseyism," spokesmen of a new school of English theology whose declared intention was to adapt the concepts of their faith to the needs of the changing world; prominent among them was Henry Scott Holland, perhaps the most winsome figure on the English religious scene of that day.

The influence of Scott Holland upon the younger men of his generation, including Tubby Clayton, is not easily assessed. It was a day in which new ideas filled the air, new voices were calling but, unfortunately, few of them had any sense of direction and fewer still the certitude of faith. Prophecy was cast in a minor key, and there seemed slight hope for majestic themes. Like most of the mentally alert, Tubby had coquetted with agnosticism upon entering Oxford. It was Scott Holland who, for Tubby and others, raised the voice of confidence. From the pulpit of St. Paul's Cathedral, London and in the Common Rooms of Oxford that large man, with the quick movements and the gift of eloquence, proclaimed his belief in the living Christ, and the words he used were made luminous with the magic of the Master's spirit. Passionately, persuasively he related religion to life and electrified the mind of his generation by invading the sacred arena of politics. His support of the Christian Social Union outraged the Tories as much as his articles in *The Commonwealth*, like flashing rapiers piercing the soft belly of privilege, embittered the Liberals. But his vivid sincerity, the Catholic sweep of his imagination aroused tremendous enthusiasm among the younger men, and the heart of Tubby Clayton caught fire.

It so happened at that time that Dr. John Stansfeld visited Oxford. He had a commanding face with a black beard and a history and views that were distinctly individual. He was a poorly-paid Civil Servant who had qualified as a physician in his spare time. For years he had lived in Bermondsey, the poorest borough

in South London, where he devoted every hour of his leisure to running a boys' club and to doctoring, for no fees, patients too poor to afford any. He believed that life had a purpose and, what was more, that this purpose had not penetrated the mind of the University of Oxford.

Tubby fell beneath his spell one night when the Doctor strode into his room and proceeded to tell the four young men playing Bridge what he thought of Oxford's neglect of its duty to its neighbour. He finished up by telling them to come down to Bermondsey and see how the other half of the world lived—and starved! Before twelve months had passed each had made his pilgrimage to Bermondsey.

Some of Oxford's brightest spirits followed the Doctor when he returned to the drudgery of his London slum. The name of Alec Paterson is still remembered in Bermondsey apart from his international fame as a prison reformer. Few who knew him could ever forget Donald Hankey whose portrait of The Beloved Captain in *A Student in Arms* might well have been himself. He died at the head of his platoon in France with the cry "If wounded—Blighty: if killed—The Resurrection!" And then there was Barclay Baron who lived as sensitively as he wrote and who, later, devoted his life to the cause of Toc H. A gallant band into which Tubby led his school friend Cecil Rushton who soon took his place, at first a trifle shyly—for he was the only non-Oxford man—but later with an unstudied spontaneity that endeared him to all.

Tubby's first visit left no doubts as to how the other half of the world lived. To get to Bermondsey you worked your way to the Bricklayers' Arms and then picked up a tram with two shabby horses pulling a battered loose-box on four wheels. On such occasions, men coming down for the first time from Oxford were innocents abroad. But Bermondsey, whilst suspicious of their purpose, was not ill-humoured over their mistakes. The inquiry for the Mission was not well received; there is perhaps no word which freezes up an English atmosphere more than the mention of a mission. Tubby changed his tactics and asked for Dr. Stansfeld. This had an immediate effect on the conductor and brought in others to direct his steps.

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The ill-lit streets brought him at last to the Mission, distinguished by an agitated gas-jet above the doorway. Sounds of violent activity emerged from the end of the hall where a large room served simultaneously as a gymnasium, concert hall and reading room, while one corner of the passage outside housed the Doctor's dispensary. For the evening the big room provided an oblong boxing booth where the art was in furious progress; sharp-boned lads in waistcoats and shirtsleeves were slamming it out with gloves whose stuffing was leaving them with every hit. He was startled by the deep puce colour of the skinny arms until he remembered that Bermondsey held tanyards.

Before he had absorbed the full significance of this department of the Oxford Mission, his presence had become known to Dr. Stansfeld whose black beard appeared, as if by magic, from behind the dispensary partition. He beckoned to his visitor. Stepping inside Tubby saw at once why the door had remained shut; it was a shocking sight, especially to one who had not seen such a thing before. Upon a chair under a gas-light there sat a man leaning a little forward. He had the body of an English ploughman and clothes of the fustian kind; in age, about fifty-five, in breed, slow moving and of the Saxon stock. As Tubby entered he saw nothing amiss; but stepping to the Doctor's side, he noticed a facial wound that terrified him. The whole of the left cheek had given way, and through the cavity, all raw and red, his mouth was faintly visible in the shadow. By his side upon a little table there was a small white basin with some dressings, on the gas-fire was a kettle venting steam. The Doctor said simply: "Come over here, and hold this basin for me." The young man held the basin while the Doctor bathed with little swabs, talking meanwhile to both of them in turn.

The man's name was James Weston and years previously he had come out of the Weald of Kent to Bermondsey. All had gone well with him. He had found work, and settled down in a room or two, brought up his children, lived in decent poverty, until the day when the hideous thing began. During the last few months it had grown worse. Now he came every night to have it dressed and syringed while he was on the waiting list for Guy's Hospital.

The Doctor did something else that night that Tubby never forgot. A further patient came in, this time a boy. Stansfeld was anxious to avoid the boy's eyes lighting on an ugliness that might unnerve him. He told him therefore to remain outside. He then turned round and said, "Now we will change over. You take the syringe, and I will hold the basin." Such was the art of teaching social service. By the end of the evening Philip Clayton of Exeter had no illusions about the work of a city mission, and a tremendous admiration for Stansfeld.

His description of his own part in the work is modest: "Myself, I could contribute nothing to the spirit of that spot, and was as much out of place as an American arriving at Ober-Ammergau by aeroplane. . . . I was only a clog in the proceedings." The members of the mission thought otherwise.

The first years at Oxford had been leisurely and gay, but with the approach of the finals there came a sense of urgency—too much time had been wasted. But his capacity to work all hours of the day and night stood him in good stead. The decision to take Orders had already been made. There is little doubt that both Scott Holland and Stansfeld had much to do with the change in attitude, but due allowance must also be made for his own initiative. He actually began to read theology with the idea of proving Christianity demonstrably untrue ("a dangerous experiment" he afterwards confessed), but ended up by being convinced of its truth. The evidence was too good.

The most agitated man in the University on the day of Finals was "Nippy" Williams, Tubby's tutor and later Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity. Tubby had been taken ill, and during recent months (working under pressure) he had unexpectedly blossomed into a "star" pupil. The tutor had great hopes. But the doctor forbade the examination and Williams had to support him. Tubby, however, was not to be deterred, fever or no fever. He dosed himself with aspirins. In fact, so much so that he became "drunk on the things."

The ride in the hansom cab from the Acland Nursing Home to the examination hall was rather like the return from an undergrads' spree in the early hours of the morning. But on this occasion the comatose world that enveloped him in the rear of the cab was

induced by fever and not brandy. Curious glances followed the figure that stumbled into the Examination Schools. He had not the faintest idea what he wrote; the only impression was of endless papers swimming before his eyes. He returned to bed, and was seriously ill for a fortnight.

On the day of the results he and his big brother Hugh, who was visiting Oxford, joined the crowd outside the Schools. He was certain that he had failed. When the lists were posted he looked anxiously, and a little hopefully for his name at the bottom. "Hugh," he relates, "naturally looked to where he was accustomed to finding himself, at the top. His assurance was rewarded. To my complete astonishment, but evidently not to his, my name headed the list." Not only did he secure a First, but wrote such brilliant papers on the New Testament and the Conflict of Religions in The Roman Empire, that his inattention to the Old Testament was forgiven.

It was a grand day. Hugh promptly bought his brother large mugs of audit ale and "two of the best briar pipes in the world." He still has one of them, and it is a hallowed possession. As well it might be, for it has consumed over a hundred pounds of tobacco, and has had fourteen mouth-pieces from all parts of the world. Hugh spent £10 that morning. A great deal of money, but it was worth it.

Oxford always has room for promising men and no one was surprised when Magdalen suggested an appointment. But Tubby had other plans. He accepted a post of preparation and research under Dr. Armitage Robinson, Dean of Westminster. In those days, it must be remembered, the theological college was still a comparatively recent institution—the first had been founded in England towards the end of the nineteenth century—and by no means unanimously favoured by the clergy, many of whom believed that the time-honoured English tradition of reading theology at the University was quite sufficient. Certainly the opportunity to read under Robinson would have been jumped at by half the graduates in England. It suited Tubby admirably and, in later years, he was wont to say, when some of the brethren became too stuffy: "Thank heaven, I . . . er . . . was denied . . . er . . . the privilege of a theological college."

We may be thankful too, for it permitted him to meet the gentle Richard Rackham who confirmed his resolution to enter the commissioned ranks of the Church.

Dr. Armitage Robinson, then Dean of Westminster, was not an ordinary person. He had but one eye, which was half-blind, and a terrible temper: but despite his defective sight he was a first-class alpinist and a scholar of European reputation. "A wind-blown personality," remarked a contemporary, "more fitted for the Helvetian altitudes than the interior of an Anglican church." To strangers his moods were terrifying. He would stamp like a tornado and then, ten minutes later, be as gentle as a child. Not an easy man to understand, especially for the stupid. But the stupid rarely met the Dean. His habit was to surround himself with four young men of recognised brilliance. Each was a First-Class Honours' man—none other was considered—and altogether they represented various professions, medicine, law, politics, the Church. They read for one year and, under normal circumstances, would pursue branches of research beyond their required reading. Tubby's tastes, for instance, were antiquarian, and he produced a monograph on the encaustic tiles of the Abbey which earned him a Fellowship in the Antiquarian Society. It was quite an achievement for a youngster just down from the University. But the Dean expected his young men to achieve something.

Tubby arrived to find Richard Rackham—whose edition of the *Acts* had been translated into many tongues—chief of the Dean's staff. He was one of the four with whom Charles Gore founded, first at Oxford, and then at Mirfield, the Community of the Resurrection. A man of beautiful character, Rackham was very delicate, and had been forced to leave the exceeding austerity of the common life at Mirfield. Charles Gore became a Canon, with his home in Little Cloister. Here he and Richard Rackham worked together, until Gore went to his Bishopric at Birmingham; at that stage Rackham joined the Dean, and shortly afterwards Clayton became a pupil of both. It was the frail and saintly Rackham that taught him to make his first confession, and later sent him to Mirfield, his home community.

Writing of this experience years later he said: "Richard Rackham, Priest of the Resurrection, dealt with me drastically.

He sat me down to write my own life searchingly, going over my memory, shelf after shelf, and record after record, trying to trace sins to their source, and intervening mercies to an invasive love I could not have deserved. This, starting as a literary game, became an agony; and then a kind of gospel became visible, weaving its threads right through the wretchedness. I worked at it every night for a month; and when I said I'd finished, he informed me that I had just begun. Next I must take it down into the Abbey and tell it out in utter loneliness to God Almighty. When I felt free, I should be also free to tear the whole thing up. I did this twice at great length, spending most of two nights alone in the Abbey. It did not work a bit; and I went back to Rackham with bitterness and told him I had failed. He then told me that he had thought it more than likely. I told him this was cruel. Nothing could now disperse the long procession of impeding spectres which he had made me summon.

"Today, when many forms of auricular confession are practised in churches and in Harley Street, and some without all scientific safeguards, it is not easy to recapture the animosity with which Rackham knew I should regard his next suggestion. It was that I should go to a good priest and lay open my grief. This I refused to do; and went on fighting until I could fight no longer. He sent me to Father Trevelyan, then at Liddon House. And there one autumn night I left my past behind me."

Many notable figures passed through the Deanery, among them Charles Gore. Gore was a frequent visitor for whenever he had duties in the metropolis he always visited and sometimes stayed at the Deanery. Tubby had long admired him at a distance, but at Westminster he came to see more of him and felt that he could rely upon his friendship. Gore, for his part, was quick to sense ability, and Tubby's articles in *The Commonwealth*, under the editorship of Scott Holland, had made him aware of the younger man. Charles Gore was brilliant and intolerant. A saint, indeed, but one cast in a very individual mould. He was once described as "the greatest Anglican brain since the Reformation," but in the presence of his intellectual inferiors he carried his learning easily enough. He was invariably worth listening to whether talking across the teacups in the Deanery drawing-room or in private

conversation or in public. He conveyed the impression of thinking aloud. His wit was dry, but effective.

"I was privileged to see much of him at that time," wrote Tubby, "and study the great saint when off his guard—not that he ever was! His way of life was so habitual, that a variation, or a glimpse of self-indulgence, was foreign to the nature of the man. At the same time observers at close quarters could never forget the aristocrat in him. If he should suffer fools, it was not gladly. Indeed, he spoke his mind in sharper tones than gentleness within the Church of England would normally dictate. To any Bishop he could, and did, grow fierce on a point of fact, if fact were urged, but they were friends again in a few moments; while Rackham, who enjoyed the clash of arms, sighed with content and watched his friends make peace."

Towards the end of his time at Westminster an assistant-mastership in classics fell vacant at his old prep. school, Colet Court. He accepted the offer and, for a short time, even debated as to whether he should continue with teaching or enter the Church. But, in reality, he had no choice: he had already surrendered himself to Christ. The phrase smacks of melodrama, but in regard to Tubby it has the merit of fact. "Not a servant, but a slave," he wrote, "a worker without contract, without any reward except by the grace and by kindness of his Master; a creature born to strict and humble obedience, devoid of any leisure belonging to himself; if idle, not dismissed, but scrapped as a sham tool. Dwell on this word, 'slave,' and awe comes back to you, the deepest need of our lives. . . ." It was obviously impossible for such a man to be happy except in the service of the Church. He was ordained to the Diaconate in December 1910, in Farnham Parish Chapel and priested the following year in Winchester Cathedral by Bishop Talbot. A title was offered him by Canon Bernard Wilson, Vicar of Portsea Parish Church, and he joined the staff of eighteen clergy as its most junior member. But before he did so Bernard Wilson was dead.



Portsea is one of the great parishes of the Church of England. When Tubby went there it numbered some fifty-six thousand

souls. These included every type of churchmanship, and every type of irreligion too. It offered tremendous scope for the missionary-minded, and an exacting apprenticeship for the clerical fledgling. The Church of St. Mary, Kingston, stood, and still stands, hard by Fratton Road, surrounded by a churchyard of some acres which has since been transformed into a public park. Across the road was the Vicarage, and the Vicarage cottage, spaciouly invested with grassland, wisely preserved. It was a setting of dignity if not unusual beauty. Vicar Jacob, to whose foresight the mother church owed its foundation, became Bishop of St. Albans, and was succeeded by Cosmo Gordon Lang. When Lang went to Stepney, Winchester College selected Bernard Wilson for the Parish of Portsea, which had been built up upon the principle that "a house-going parson makes a church-going people." As the parish grew it was so thoroughly visited that in Bernard Wilson's day clergy were taken on to the staff for this sole duty. Judged by modern standards, Wilson was not much of a doctrinal expert and his sacramental teaching may have lacked definite expression, but as a pastoral influence in his parish, by day and night, his priesthood was fulfilled.

Spending and being spent, early and late, he went one day to give out prizes at the Portsmouth Grammar School, from which his famous senior curate, Cyril Garbett, had gone to Oxford and carried all before him. On the school platform Bernard Wilson collapsed, dying the same day. Huge crowds of both Church and Chapel folk thronged the streets at his funeral, and the homes of those who had never darkened the doors of any church mourned him no less. Every shop in Fratton was closed for the occasion, and most of those in Portsmouth and Southsea. In the Royal Dockyard a copy of *John Bull* which made slighting reference to Wilson was publicly burned by a great body of dockyard workers. Who could ask for a nobler requiem?

This, then, was the parish, and Cyril Garbett the man to whom P. B. Clayton went at the age of twenty-five. He was not particularly confident because he was well aware that he was joining a parish thronged with muscular clerics, five of whom were County cricketers, and the others probably should have been. The legend in the parish held small comfort for a newcomer modestly endowed

with athletic gifts: it was that the curates of Portsea had a few years earlier played the Australian Test Team in an all-day match after its landing at Southampton, and the curates had won hands down. Most of them had private means, with a shoot beyond Cathrington, to which they sometimes rode. He had a feeling that his antiquarian researches in the Abbey were not exactly the most suitable preparation for such company, and the circumstances of his appointment to the one vacancy on the staff did not help matters.

When he had travelled down to Portsea for the interview with Canon Wilson the first person he bumped into was the Captain of his College Boats bound as his rival for the one vacancy; a man who spoke as winningly as he rowed. They reached the Vicarage in time for a "grisly meal known as high-tea." The interview that followed was brief, and concluded with Tubby being told that there was no need for him to spend the night. As he sadly collected his baggage, the Captain of Boats strode into the Vicar's study. But Tubby had barely reached the hall when an uproar broke out: the study door flew open and the Captain of Boats came down the stairs again. The Vicar stood at the top and thundered: "You dare to come here, engaged to be married! You dare to try to get on my staff, knowing you're not a free man!"

As he turned back to the study he espied Tubby: "Come up here, you," he roared. "You won't be of any use to us, but I'll take you on to teach him. Perhaps you'll lecture on something. That wouldn't do us any harm. You're not engaged are you? All right, come here." And P. B. Clayton joined the staff of St. Mary's at seven and sixpence a week, with board and lodging.

The curates, unless prevented by illness, were expected to be out on their rounds by two-thirty and woe betide them if they showed their faces at the church before five forty-five. Evensong was followed by tea in the Vicarage which—Wilson being a bachelor—was really a Clergy House. At seven o'clock the visiting began in earnest, and this did not end much before ten. Each curate had a district of his own, consisting of about seven hundred families, in which it was his duty to know not only Church of England people but equally every home wherever he might enter. The

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method of visiting was clearly pioneer, for the curates, eighteen of them, went into every house in every street; if entrance was refused as inconvenient, they returned after an interval. Not a soul was neglected. Having endured such godly discipline six hours a day for four years the average Portsea curate found there was not much in human nature to surprise him and, what is more, he had developed the useful faculty to be able to laugh at himself.

From earliest childhood Tubby had possessed two things—an instinct for self-derision and a capacity for hard work. He quickly proved that he had no need to feel inferior in the company of his athletic confreres. He came from a resourceful stock, and you could see it in every line of him. He presented an interesting figure at the time. He was about five feet five with a slight rotundity that did not conceal the tremendous sturdiness of his body; yet it was an ordinary enough figure that might have been duplicated a thousand times in rural England or upon the village common. It was the head that was arresting. It could have sat impressively on a giant. It was a large head with a splendid sweep of brow beneath crisp brown hair. The eyes, behind horn-rimmed spectacles, were those of a thinker, a dreamer; they were thoughtful, trusting eyes that somehow inspired you with confidence in yourself. The jaw, powerful and beautifully moulded with a suggestion of ruthlessness, was mitigated by the sensitive nose and the extraordinary sweetness of the mouth. It was, perhaps, the face of a mystic who believed in action.

Yet these marks of character might have been ignored by the unobservant for his whole personality was alive with an infectious geniality. His enthusiasm, respecting neither time, place nor person, was breath-catching, and the most phlegmatic would suddenly find themselves doing the unexpected, and doing it cheerfully. The voice was deep and attractive with a repetitive mannerism that was curiously intimate. "My . . . my dear old boy, I . . . er . . . I . . ." would unfailingly preface humour or profundity and each, in his opinion, was needful to the other. In truth, he possessed the rare quality to turn in a flash from the ridiculous to the sublime with a sincerity that was obvious to all. He really loved people. It was said that "all his geese were swans"

and possibly that was one of the secrets of his success for in later years he charged his fellow-chaplains in Toc H to "win men by trusting them." He was a man not easily forgotten.

Shortly before Tubby joined the staff the patrons were faced with the question of appointing a successor to Bernard Wilson. The Vicars of Portsea had always been men of means, but Cyril Garbett, the senior curate, was the son of a parson and without any private resources. While admitting his exceptional ability a reasonable anxiety was felt as to the wisdom of appointing a man without means to a parish that had cost the last incumbent £30,000 out of his own pocket. However, in spite of misgivings, the senior curate stepped into the Vicar's shoes. It proved a wise choice for within a few years the abracadabra of parish finance had been miraculously straightened, and he had taught the people to give as they had never given before.

Tubby and Cyril Garbett knew each other's worth. From the moment of the first meeting there was a reciprocal confidence which became the basis of a friendship that has lasted to this day. Garbett, not having the health of Bernard Wilson, was forced to discipline his hours but, nevertheless, he ran the parish with marvellous efficiency, and never for a moment lost sight of its pastoral tradition. In the attempt to straighten the finances he put the newest curate in charge of the Vicarage accounts which were showing a deficit of two thousand pounds. P.B.C. knew little about finance and absolutely nothing about running a household, but it was typical of the man that he threw himself into the job with tremendous energy. Long after the other members of the staff had gone to bed he could be found, night after night, poring over accounts and bank statements. It was doubtful if there was a housewife or merchant in Portsea who could excel, or even equal, his knowledge of the wholesale grocery market; and four years later he had not only wiped out the debt, but had a credit balance of £500. Thenceforth he decided to leave the fiscal matters to the care of others and from that day to this—usually by assuming helplessness—he hasn't deviated from the decision.

Tubby enjoyed visiting because he liked meeting people whose habits and attitudes never ceased to fascinate him and for them the rotund curate, with the inevitable pipe and shabby raincoat,

became a loved character. His bustling good-humour gained entry to every kitchen for it was well known that he scorned the awkward niceties of the parlour. Besides he had one great advantage over the average curate—he spoke the language of the housewife. After all, he was running an establishment far larger than hers and running it economically; it is not in the nature of women to resist a bargain and he knew it. Quite cheerfully he exploited his knowledge and it was seldom that a parlour held him up for more than ten minutes. Sitting on the corner of the kitchen table puffing his pipe, he would regale the children with astounding yarns (most of them made up on the spot), punctuated with shrewd asides on the cost of living, while the woman of the house brewed a cup of tea. Not infrequently he would suddenly break off a story to invent an absurd game that would reduce the entire house to a shrill pandemonium. The parishioners soon came to realise that a visit from the Rev. Philip Clayton was a strenuous affair; the nearest thing in England, it was said, to an active volcano. But Tubby was in his element. It was in Portsea that he developed the lifelong habit of taking notes on the people whom he met in the course of his work in order to go forward with any fruitful contacts he had made, or could hope to make. He was always on the look-out for the least sign of an invitation at night when the man of the house was at home; it was then that he did some of his most effective work. It also taught him something of the relationship between “the parson” and “the average man.”

It was in Portsea that he met “Siddy,” one of the most charming people ever to cross his path. Schooled at Eton and New College, Guy Sydenham Hoare was to add Flanders and Mirfield before death claimed him. They met in the Kingston Vicarage when Siddy, in his vague, forgetful way, dropped in; he often did but whenever the host inquired as to the reason for a specific visit he would usually find that Siddy himself had forgotten. He knew all right, he would say, when he left home. Why, was it . . . ? he would stammer. Why, perhaps . . . and then his voice would fade into a smile. “If the character of Sherlock Holmes came from an Edinburgh doctor,” said Tubby, “I like to think that Baroness Orczy must have heard of Siddy before she drew the Scarlet Pimpernel. Siddy was none other than Sir Percy Blakeney in his

full inanity. . . . Wit, height, strength, wealth, courage, were all on board him amply, hidden beneath a deck cargo of shyness and indolence and absurdity. He took some knowing, Siddy."

He certainly did. Standing benignly beside the mantel or lolling on the floor he might dreamily refer to some hair-raising escapade in Poland or Turkestan—forgetting to mention that he had played a leading part—or apologetically inquire about the nature and possibilities of Heaven. On one occasion when fumbling in his pocket to confirm an engagement he drew forth a long envelope. He gazed at it thoughtfully, opened it, and exclaimed: "No, by jove, this is what I came for! I wanted the Vicar's views on this. I wrote it yesterday. It's an attempt at squaring the vicious circle of Pope v. Puritan, don't you know." His voice trailed away. . . . Tubby took the paper and found himself confronted with the most extraordinary handwriting he had ever seen. It was neat, attractive, but not one letter was completed, as if the pen had tired of designing it, and jumped unceremoniously to the next. Of course, it was hopelessly illegible.

"I'll leave it with you," he said exultingly, for of pride he had none. "Let's talk it over tomorrow."

"What's it all about?"

"You'll find out when you read it."

But on the morrow there was no chance for a discussion because the five thousand Sunday School children of the parish had to be transported to the park on Siddy's estate which he had loaned for the day. He was completely lost in the great crush of children, and never did anyone work harder for the enjoyment of others. But that was not all. The next day the Vicar got a cheque which took his breath away. The figure, we are told, was perfectly legible.

Those years in a coastal town encouraged Tubby's deep love for the sea. His parishioners, for the most part, were a seafaring people. Their sons manned the grey Dreadnoughts of the Royal Navy and sailed the oceans in the Merchant Marine; he had prepared scores of them for Confirmation and when the casualties began to come through during those early months of the First World War he had some bad moments. It was, in fact, the disaster of the *Good Hope*, largely manned from his portion of the parish,

that drove him urgently to renew his pleas to Canon Cyril Garbett that he should be allowed to volunteer.

It can be easily seen that for a clergyman schooled in the atmosphere of Portsea preaching was hardly the climax of the week's work. But its importance was never underestimated by Tubby although he preferred to find his expression in other directions, "Preaching, like other arts," he once wrote, "is easily despised by those who have small aptitude for the pursuit. We may be very sure that when the Revival really comes, it will be served by teams of out-door preachers. Let none of us meanwhile surrender to sour grapes, condemning preaching for the inward reason that we cannot ourselves achieve it. . . . Yet it is gravely true that many men whom God would have as priests stand back because of preaching. The pulpit and its customary duties deter them from the Ministry to which their humbleness and sanctity would be a precious boon. The days will surely come when no one will expect the parish priest to climb the pulpit stairs so constantly as now. Men gifted for this work must have especial training and leave the pastor free to visit, to guide, to lead the people's worship." It was in guiding men that he was most gifted, and his curacy gave scope to a talent that was to influence many of his fellow-countrymen.

When a man's time is so organised that day tumbles upon day with scarcely an opportunity to open even a newspaper the tide of world affairs is apt to pass him by. In any case, those were times in which most people were far more interested in how the tomatoes and roses were coming along than in which nation had decided to commit suicide; that was why the tragic uproar that followed the shot in Sarajevo was so unexpected. And with the brutal disruption of people's lives parochial cares shrank to insignificance; parsons, as well as laymen, got ready to enter the fray in an attempt to save some of the things that had made life worth living. There was much to be done in Portsea as the hinterland of Portsmouth, the senior Naval Dockyard of Great Britain. But Vicar Garbett knew the Army well and spared four clergy for the Western Front in the Spring of 1915.

CHAPTER IV

TUBBY landed in France several months after the outbreak of war. His impatience to reach the Western Front was understandable at a time when the prophets were predicting that "the boys would be home by Christmas." But as the lists of the casualties began to come through, the strategists revised their time-tables. The fight for the next four years was a series of bloody campaigns on land and sea—with lethal sideshows in the air—backed by the terrifying ingenuity of a creative civilisation that had dedicated its soul to destruction. Is it any wonder that men's hearts almost failed them? If ever they needed some glimpse of wall-paperdom, as Tubby put it, some commonplace reminder that they were still normal beings and not robots conscripted in the service of a hideous Demogorgon it was during those years.

He was first posted to No. 16 General Hospital which occupied the great hotel on the cliffs above Le Treport. The place was grievously overcrowded and around the huge tented camp juxtaposed to the hotel there sprawled another, less grim but grimly serviceable. It was known as the "Con. Camp," one of the earliest of those pathetic clearing stations from which the "walking wounded" (men slightly gassed or temporarily lamed) were drafted back to the front line. Many of them should have been sent home—at a later stage there would have been no hesitation—but in 1915 there was a desperate shortage of men and the diminishing regiments were a summons that could not be ignored.

As the year advanced the situation grew worse. Gas warfare had been launched by the Germans in the Ypres salient in April and the sufferings of the stricken men were indescribable. It became impossible to keep any but the severely wounded for more than a few days and, when the big rushes were signalled to come upon the hospital, the Con. Camp was cleared in readiness. Each day columns of limping detachments could be seen leaving

Le Treport on their way to the trenches where they would cough out their lungs or be drowned in the mud or, if they were lucky, thank God for the luxury of a bullet. It may not have been the hazardous side of war that Tubby encountered in the General Hospital at Le Treport but it was among the most depressing. "By the time I came," he wrote, "the doctors and nurses had grown accustomed to the absence of religious provision, and accepted the moratorium in Christianity for the most part with fortitude."

He needed all his humour and courage to inure himself to the awful depression of the place. They were men for whom all illusions had been shattered; gone was the glory and the star-dust, the stimulus of unknown danger or the enthusiasm for causes—all that remained was the burning desire to get home or the dread of being redrafted to God knows what.

It was at Le Treport that he met Corporal Bradbear. It had been a wretched day with a series of desperate cases sandwiched in between innumerable calls and services. He was dog-tired, and took no pains to hide it. Those who have known Tubby across the years know that, on such occasions, he can be difficult. As he entered the Con. Camp he was met by Corporal Bradbear at the sight of whom weariness was forgotten. One glance at the man's face told him that all was not well. He soon learned the story. Bradbear had missed Blighty by a hairsbreadth. His wound was fairly severe and ordinarily he would have been sent home for many months. But the doctors' humanity was qualified by the chronic shortage of men. They had voted almost evenly on his case, but in the end it had gone against him. He had taken the verdict without a murmur, just the odd tightening of the mouth that had caught Tubby's eye.

The two men walked across to the great marquee in which the evening service was to be held and Tubby confesses that he never felt more inarticulate or inadequate. What on earth could he say to this man in his hour of crisis? What could he say to any of those men who were going back to frightfulness? He had so far known no actual danger nor shared their common agonies which, in their eyes, would give reality to his sympathy. If, as he said, "they were being forced back into the maelstrom from which

they had already emerged, as a child might push a half-drowned fly back into the bowl," then he felt like a fellow-fly surveying the scene from the remote safety of the ceiling. What could he say? How dare he say anything at all? It was then that Corporal Bradbear, as if divining his thoughts, suddenly said: "I'll say something, Padre, if you'll let me. I'm going up tomorrow, and they'll excuse me for that." Tubby saw it for what it was—an augury!

The Corporal, slim and pale, stood beneath the hurricane lamps that cast their fitful shadows around the great marquee in which were seated over a thousand men. He took his inspiration from the Acts of the Apostles: "Peter therefore was kept in prison, but prayer was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him." He was not a practised speaker. The words came slowly and haltingly, but they were irradiated with a sincerity that was almost apostolic. The men that crowded the tent, wounded, embittered, fearful, knew that they were listening to the truth, and the truth had the power to make them free.

Peter the prisoner, he said, and themselves, committed by inheritance to great causes, were standing to experience whatever lay before them; the darkness of the prison, and themselves held in the fearful darkness of human malignity and folly. And all the while St. Peter, never faltering, never doubting, was vividly conscious that, at no great distance the family which God had given him was on its knees in a passion of prayer. The analogy was brilliantly obvious. Below the cliffs of Le Treport raced the Channel seas across which lay the shores of England; along the length and breadth of that ancient land, in homes stately and mean, folks were at prayer, and such prayers could not fail. His words held no hope of bodily safety—it would have been madness to do so; but they were instinct with the optimism of the Master. Fear not the power that could kill the body and he, like his Master, had the right to say it because his own Calvary was not far away.

He died in 1917, but the words he uttered that night confirmed the discouraged heart of an Anglican chaplain. They gave Tubby a fresh awareness of man's courage and worth, and a resolution that, come what may, he would never doubt those whom he had been commissioned to serve; he would win men by trusting them. "It was an occasion," he said in his own way, "of a kind rare

indeed in latter-day history, when a sense of blind and inexorable doom was pierced and shattered by the spirit of one man, himself no less a victim than his audience, yet aglow with an indescribable force of conviction that what the Father does is well." From that night one man never doubted it.

The end of the summer saw him back in England, his place having been taken by John Macmillan who afterwards became the Bishop of Guildford. He was not in the mood for frivolity and spent most of his leave with his parents at Beaulieu. He played some hard tennis and in the peace of the New Forest tried to forget that the world had gone mad and so many of his friends would never again know the beauty of an English summer. But it was no use. He could not detach himself from the swift tragic march of events. It was with a sense of relief that he received his orders to rejoin the B.E.F., and he boarded the boat at Folkestone on November 10, 1915. On reaching Montreuil he reported to Bishop Gwynne (formerly Bishop of Khartoum, and later of Egypt and Sudan) who as Deputy-Chaplain-General was the chief of all Church of England padres in the B.E.F. throughout the war. He was well received and the Bishop spoke glowingly of his work at Le Treport. It had been decided, he was informed, not to send him to the Guards Division as originally arranged but, by special request, to work under Neville Talbot.

Talbot was an old friend of Tubby's who had gone out from Balliol College, Oxford, where he had been chaplain for four years. He was no stranger to Army life, having held a Regular commission in the Rifle Brigade during the South African War. He stood six feet seven in his socks and was built in proportion. He was a legend in the Salient, and the spectacle of him seated on his 17½ hands horse was awe-inspiring by day and eerie by night. When Tubby arrived in Flanders the future Bishop of Pretoria was Senior Chaplain of the 6th Division, and a man greatly beloved. It was he, as Tubby pointed out in a sermon at St. Margaret's, Westminster, on the occasion of his death in 1943, who won the service Chaplains "their liberation from the restrictive regulations which forbade the Chaplain's presence with his troops when they were faced with active operations. During the autumn of '14 Neville was ordered to remain behind with a rear section of the

Brigade Field Ambulance. Neville broke through this obsolete confinement, and rejoined as the first Chaplain in the Line itself, with the Third Battalion of the Rifle Brigade; he had been with them in South Africa. To that deliberate indiscipline, all Chaplains owe their freedom to accompany troops into the fighting. Over one hundred Chaplains paid for this privilege, gladly, with their lives." This was the man under whom Tubby had been called to serve.

The train that took him from Montreuil to Poperinghe ended its dismal journey in the early hours of a cold, wet morning. There were few people in sight and the meagre lights enhanced the sinister contours of the shell-scarred station. Declining offers of help he left his luggage at the office of the Railway Transport Officer, and set out for Poperinghe on foot with the vague intention of finding a hotel. Outside the station the road had been churned into a mire, and the night was inky; by a curious mischance he took the opposite direction from the crowd of passengers returning from leave and floundered along the famous *pavé* causeway that led to Vlamertinghe and Ypres. After splashing for half an hour through the darkness, spasmodically illuminated by the flash of distant guns, he began seriously to doubt the existence of Poperinghe; he confided his doubts to two men who loomed out of the blackness and was promptly told he was walking away from Poperinghe. In any case, there were no hotels to be found. His best policy, they advised, was to return to the Railway Transport Officer and ask that worthy to take great care of a homeless Church of England parson until the Army saw fit to collect him. Their good-natured chuckles faded in the night as Tubby struggled back to the station. There may be more comfortable ways of spending a night than on the bench of a draughty station but, as Tubby rightly suspected, there were also many worse ways on the Western Front. The R.T.O. proved an amiable chap who used the phone to such good purpose that before daybreak members of the London Field Company had arrived and transported him to the Chaplains' Camp. His most vivid recollection of the R.T.O.'s office was the sight of a young lad who was marched in under military escort to return to England. The down was scarcely on his cheek, yet he wore a Military Medal ribbon. His offence was apparently one of premature

patriotism. He had enlisted at sixteen, like many another, by falsifying his age, and before they caught up with him he had not only been fighting for six months but had been decorated for conspicuous gallantry. It was the kind of misdemeanour that helps to win wars. Tubby began to feel cheerful.

The value of Poperinghe, he soon discovered, was that it was close enough to the front line to be directly accessible to the chief sufferers and to provide an effective spring-board for large-scale operations. Loosely known as "Pop" it was a town of about 11,000 inhabitants, too large to be entirely ignored on the major maps. It was dominated by a square whose ambitious dimensions befitted a metropolis and vivisected by streets of such appalling narrowness that movement of any kind was a danger to life. The population varied with the dictates of strategy or the fortunes of war. Sometimes it rose to a quarter of a million, at others it fell to less than fifty, but whether congested or empty the estaminets remained open and the refugee shops continued to display worthless souvenirs. Occasionally the shelling was heavy but, for the most part, intermittent and inaccurate, landing in streets, gardens or back-parlours with impartiality. This danger, it must be admitted, gave a certain piquancy to the entertainments provided in the town—there was always the anticipation that Jerry would liquidate the really bad tenors.

The best of the shows was undoubtedly "Fancies" in which, under the constant care of their mother, two Belgian sisters, known to the audience as Lanoline and Vaseline, would dance and sing to the vast delight of the troops. Of the four chief restaurants in the town two were already thriving when Tubby arrived and "Ginger," a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl maintained strict virtue in *A La Grande Poupée* behind a shop in the Square. "War was still a sporting event," remarked Tubby in the *Tales of Talbot House*, "and 'living dangerously' was salutary, as Nietzsche taught. The ethics of home were not blurred by long absence, and the Russian 'steam-roller' was not yet ditched. No prospect pleased, but man was perfectly glorious." The disillusionment came later!

He found that the most impressive thing about the Chaplains' Quarters was the name. He was billeted in a "kind of wild west

log-hut" whose only means of light or ventilation was the door through which could be seen similar huts scattered like islands in the mud. But he was so delighted at being in the thick of things that he even detected a resemblance to Beaulieu which must have given his mother a comforting if not altogether precise impression of her son's situation. There was a cheerful ring in the letter he wrote shortly after his arrival:

It's altogether like living in a pheasant preserve, and the sound of the guns is like Beaulieu on the first of September, only the noise is louder and more continuous—day and night from three points of the compass. It's very difficult to believe that it is real war, until one sees, as I saw on my first day, the ghastly reality of it in new ruins and new dead.

I'm living here in a kind of bush brotherhood of six, with my old friend Neville Talbot as our boss. This was the Deputy-Chaplain-General's rearrangement for me when I reached him on Friday, and I believe Jones has gone instead of me to the Guards Division. My flock are apparently to be some Buffs and Bedfords, but chances of really getting in touch with them, beyond parade services, seem far and few between. But I hope, please God, to find better work to do than mere parades and funerals. But it's early days yet; in a week or so I shall be able to see my way more clearly.

Within a few days he started to move around but travelling anywhere presented serious difficulties. He borrowed a horse, not a particularly vigorous one, and found the traffic so dense that he was forced to the side of the road where the beast quickly sank to its belly in the mud. Never an expert in the saddle he decided in favour of a bicycle; at least it conveyed an illusion of movement and occasional lifts in Army trucks took him to the more distant posts. His habit of greeting all and sundry, from brass hats to privates, soon attracted attention and the feeling grew that here was no ordinary chaplain.

The idea of opening a place in which services could be held and the men could relax with some degree of comfort probably came from the Chaplains, although Neville Talbot had long been on the

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look-out for quarters. The first hint was contained in a letter which Tubby wrote home towards the end of November 1915 :

Talbot is trying to get a house for me in the nearest town, where I can both live myself and start some kind of homely club for a few of the multitudes of troops who pass to and fro. I'm strongly in favour of this, as it's work I should be less of a duffer at than this bush brotherhood business, with its distracting distances. If it pans out I shall want a lot of odd things like papers and pens and pictures (of the *Pears Annual* type) and shall also have a room for a chapel which we badly need for Confirmation work as well as Celebrations.

News reached the Senior Chaplain, by way of the Town Major, that M. Coevoet Camerlynck, a wealthy hop merchant, was about to leave town and his mansion on the Rue de l'Hôpital would be vacant. After getting the assent of Colonel May, then "Q" of the Sixth Division, Talbot and Tubby hurried to see M. Camerlynck whom they found to be an ungenerous but rather frightened individual. A shell had struck the back part of the house, smashed one corner of the attic which ran the length of the building, and a bedroom below it, and blown every piece of glass out of the windows. The storms and rains swept in freely both sideways and from above. Quite obviously, if left untenanted the house would probably have deteriorated to such an extent that restoration would not have been worth while, a fact which the two padres did not hesitate to point out. Better take the money, they argued, and leave the Army to make the best of a bargain that might prove good or bad. But the Belgian refused to sell. He was shrewd enough to foresee that he could command a better price after the war, and even if the house were totally destroyed he would still own the land.

Nevertheless, he eventually agreed to tenancy on two conditions : (1) to make the house completely weatherproof and maintain it in first-class condition and (2) to remove from the front-room a large brown safe that had been left behind after all the other furniture had been removed. The rent was fixed at 150 francs a month. M. Camerlynck was bowed out, little suspecting that his

mansion was destined to become one of the most famous houses in the world—nor, for that matter, did Tubby as he moved in with the Army at his heels.

The first job was to remove the safe, and then get the place in order. The removal of the safe may have seemed an odd stipulation, but the Belgian knew what he was about. When Tubby and Neville came to inspect it they found it to be as immovable as a human creation can be; it not only resisted them, but took ten minutes of strenuous heaving on the part of a sixteen-man labour squad before the slightest movement was visible. Two mules and the Transport Division's heaviest wagon were also conscripted to the task because a vague superstition had begun to infect the squad that the successful issue of the war somehow depended upon the outcome of their struggle with the safe. Incited by the jibes and cheers of the crowd that had gathered in the narrow street a supreme effort was at last made and the safe fell forward with a crash on to the rollers. Drag-ropes were thrown freely to the spectators and slowly the safe moved towards the floor of the wagon. A great shout went up. The war was in the bag! But it took the Bedfords the best part of the morning to do it. It was warmly agreed that there was nothing sentimental about M. Camerlynck.

While a party of male housemaids from the Bedfords cleaned up and the London R.E.'s repaired the damaged walls and roof, the new occupants inspected the premises. They were attractive and, what was more to the point, capacious. You entered the door into a large hall which passed right through the house; on the left was a drawing-room, spacious and decorative, beyond which could be seen a dining-room that looked somewhat dingy by comparison. The windows gave a glimpse of the garden with its flowers and trees and the conservatory that lay along the whole breadth of the house at the back. This had been badly damaged by a stray shell from the Pilkem Ridge direction. On the right of the hall was a small office and the kitchen. The first floor was reached by an elegant gold and white staircase that brought you to four large bedrooms and a dressing-room; the next landing, which was exceptionally large, introduced you to a huge nursery and three small bedrooms. Above this, and reached by an awkward companion-ladder, was the attic; it was here that the Engineers

were working to repair the roof and walls, and the interior of one of the bedrooms below.

The inspection revealed endless possibilities, and the fecundity of Tubby's imagination proved inexhaustible when dealing with the problems of making troops happy and comfortable. The drawing-room, he indicated with an airy wave of the hand, would become a Recreation Room with some sort of Refreshment Bar, "soft" of course. Upstairs, on the first landing, could be the Library and Writing Room while one of the other rooms would become the Chaplain's Room. On the next floor the bedrooms would be used to accommodate for a night or two all those fellows who were returning or going on leave. It was an admirable division of utility. But what about the Chapel which every Chaplain, and above all Tubby, regarded as the most important part of any large establishment? In that preliminary tour of inspection each room had been assigned its function. All that remained was the attic or loft which, situated directly beneath the roof, ran the entire length of the building after the manner of most Belgian houses. In times of peace fruits were usually stored there to ripen but, as someone appropriately suggested, Tubby detected a place in which fruits of a different, more valuable kind could mature.

This then would be the Chapel and up those precarious steps men would climb above anxiety and find a measure of peace in God's presence. Not unexpected is the generosity with which he gives the credit for the decision to others. By happy chance the Queen's Westminsters were billeted in rotation next door, and from the moment M. Camerlynck walked out they took an unflagging interest in the Old House. To them Tubby ascribes the evolution of the Chapel in a statement they would most certainly contradict, except for the last sentence: "The Westminsters . . . were the prime movers in the transformation of the big hop-loft into the Chapel, being quick to grasp its artistic possibilities. I can see them now fixing the great red hangings which the Bishop of Winchester had sent us from the old private Chapel at Southwark."

The discovery of the carpenter's bench in the garden of No. 16 seemed to some to be nothing more than a coincidence, but to others, more devoutly inclined, it was almost a sign from Heaven.

Tubby found it, scarred with long usage, in an outhouse and the inspiration to requisition it for an altar in the Carpenter's service was hardly less wonderful than the discovery itself. It was lugged to the first landing which, because of its spaciousness, was being used as a Chapel until the completion of the attic-chapel towards the end of December; and when the time came for it to be moved to the Upper Room (as the new Chapel was called) it had already become an unearthly symbol to hundreds of men. But that belonged to the future. In the meantime, No. 16 was rapidly adapting itself to its new character which dispensed with all formalities of admission and allowed anyone, whatever rank or race, to walk in unbidden and be received as a friend.

I think Erasmus might well have said of the Old House and its Keeper what he once said of Sir Thomas More: "His whole house breathes happiness, and no one enters it who is not the better for the visit." Therein lay the power of attraction. After all, it was not the only Church house or club on the Western Front—far from it; but it can be justifiably claimed that it was unique, that it possessed some indefinable quality of radiance which the others lacked. And why? it may be asked. The answer is really very simple. There was only *one* Tubby Clayton and the glowing intimate atmosphere of the House was an actual projection of the wit, laughter and friendliness of the man himself. Perhaps Neville Talbot caught the spirit more felicitously than anyone in a passage of a Foreword he wrote to one of Tubby's works after the war: "Talbot House . . . was open to all the world, was full of friendship, hominess, fun, music, games, laughter, books, pictures and discussion. And at the top, in the loft, obtruding upon no one, but dominating everything, was the Chapel—a veritable shrine, glowing with the beauty of holiness. Thus, above and below, the House was full of the glory of God." The Innkeeper, there is no doubt, had a knack of making gay folk thoughtful, and most of the others pleasant.

The most important job in those early days was to make the House look like a home, and not a deserted mansion that had known better days. The town shops had either been blown out of existence or else the owners had fled, which left the occupants of Talbot House with the alternative of sitting on the floor or making their

own furniture. Those first chairs and tables were pretty rough but they served their purpose. Across the road was a battered shop in which a lively Belgian lad and his mother and sister still carried on business. Scrambling over the rubble of what was once the staircase Tubby managed to reach the second floor, or rather the remains of it. A half hour's delving and poking amid the debris brought to light several undamaged cups and saucers which swelled the small purchasable stock below, and a crucifix of white clay, with a hand splintered by a fragment of shell. The three-franc crucifix went to adorn the Chapel, and the crockery found its way to the club-room. But the new Innkeeper was determined to build a real home in which men could relax in comfort and, for a few hours or days, forget the war. He believed in the curative qualities of comfort; a chintz curtain or an easy chair could remind an exhausted soldier, fed up to the teeth with everything, that somewhere beyond the carnage of the trenches men were still civilised, and that home was not far as the crow flew.

Before long, crates of furniture—pots and pans, curtains and rugs, paper-baskets, clocks, flower vases and tablecloths—were arriving in illogical sequence from England, Scotland and Wales. Every avenue of possible supplies was quickly explored; every acquaintance shamelessly and cheerfully exploited for the common cause, and within a few months the Old House looked as comfortable, and considerably more homelike than most London clubs. His search for a piano had him wandering in a forbidden area under escort; through no fault of his own his name was temporarily changed and he narrowly missed being arrested as a spy. But he returned triumphant from the expedition having extracted, not one, but two pianos from Lieutenant Robinson of the 47th Battery who, for reasons unknown, owned three. "I handed over one to Bates," he records, "for a hut at Peselhoek—the worse one, of course. The better was very good indeed, and even in its old age, after three years of constant strumming, retained its tone. Moreover it had learnt things. If you so much as sat down before it in 1918, it played 'A Little Grey Home in the West' without further action on your part."

The late comers of '17 and '18, confronted with the benevolent

efficiency of Talbot House whose fame had already spread to England, could not have suspected its modest origins in the winter of 1915. Quite typically, Tubby recruited his first congregation from the "Fancies." It had been a particularly robust show but, after it was all over, he had insisted in leading a number of them around to the new House. Fortified with cocoa from cracked mugs and jam tins they toured the place and finally paid a brief tribute in the Chapel on the landing. It was all done very naturally, and no one felt in the least bit uncomfortable. But the best description of those opening days is by P.B.C. himself. "On the first night (December 11, 1915)," he writes, "I find by the visitors' book that one officer (curiously enough a namesake—Lieutenant Clayton, of the West Yorks) going on leave, stayed with us and from then onwards the door was open day and night. Men swarmed about the place from ten a.m. to eight p.m., and officers flowed in from seven p.m. till the leave trains came and went. From each officer we demanded five francs for board and lodging, on the Robin Hood principle of taking from the rich to give to the poor. For this sum the officers secured on arrival from the leave train at one a.m., cocoa and Bath Oliver biscuits, or before departure at five a.m. a cold meat breakfast. The bedrooms were communal, save for the dressing-room, which was turned ambitiously into the 'General's bedroom,' on account of a bed with one real sheet, to speak to him of home. The field officer who was so fortunate as to secure this luxury was free to decide whether the sheet was more appropriate above or below his horizontal person. We had two sheets; but one was at the wash. For the rest, stretcher beds and blankets provided more facilities for sleep than a leave-goer required, or than a returning officer expected. Those were the days of simplicity. . . ."

But it was a gay simplicity. Entering the hall one's attention was attracted to the Notice Board before which was usually a group of officers and men. Here was to be found the hand of the Jester, and it was well worth studying. Its merry absurdities made each change on the Notice Board an event of some importance in the life of the House, and, in truth, in Poperinghe itself where the witticisms were circulated and lost nothing in the telling. At a time when humour, from the aspects of morale, was much

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needed, Tubby's weekly charivari was not only popular, it was important.

Notices came and went but there were three that were permanent and they became as familiar to visitors as the House itself. The first, in the form of a hand, pointed to the front-door with the inscription "TO PESSIMISTS—WAY OUT." The second was a little farther along over the Visitors' Book which everyone was expected to sign. It read: "Please write your name and address in the Visitors' Book, otherwise how can we forward your umbrella or trace our teaspoons?" And the third, fittingly ironic: "If you are accustomed to spit on the carpet at home, please spit here." An immediate understanding was established: having digested the signs one was, more or less, prepared for the Notice Board. Tubby was irreverently catholic but always to the point. There was the appeal for clothes which ran:

EXCHANGE & MART

A handsome, kindly, and middle-aged individual, who prefers to remain anonymous, finds that his neck is growing thicker during long years of warfare, with the result that seventeen-inch shirts and seventeen and a half collars produce a perpetual strangulation. If this could catch the eye of any gentleman upon whose neck the yoke of the Army life is producing the contrary effect, an exchange of wardrobe would be to the welfare of both. Address P.B.C., THE OFFICE.

Mr. Horatio Bottomley, the outspoken owner of the weekly journal *John Bull*, whose vociferous patriotism concealed a multitude of sins, mostly of the get-rich-quick variety, would not have been pleased had he seen the Notice Board one January morning.

Horatio Bottomley speaks out:

"When I left the shell-swept area of General Headquarters, the dull reverberation of machine-guns made me, like an old soldier, wrap my gas helmet closer round my knees. Haig—you may trust him—I say, you may trust him—said to me: 'Keep your napper down, old man; think what your life means to England.'

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On our way back, we motored through a small town, which the General beside me specially asked me not to specify to my two million readers. We flashed past the gloomy doorway of a miserable House in a narrow street. A smug and sour-faced parson stood in the doorway of this so-called Soldiers' Club, with a bundle of tracts in one hand and a subscription list in the other. Mark my words. You know the type. The so-called Church has not stirred a finger anywhere in the war-zone for anyone."

The advice of the following was rightly regarded as inferior to the humour:

STOP PRESS

A tidy draft of reinforcements in woollies—i.e., socks, etc.—has reached T.H. from the ever-generous Mrs. Fry of Bristol. Application for the same should be made to the Chaplain. All queues prohibited by Sir A. Yapp. Allotment, one sock per battalion.

HOW TO FIND YOUR BEARINGS ON A DARK NIGHT WITHOUT A COMPASS

This is an old Scout's tip

Take a watch, not your own, tie a string to it, swing it round your head three times, and then let go, saying to the owner: "That's gone West." The points of the compass being thus established you proceed rapidly in the safest direction. P.B.C.

But one instruction on the Notice Board was rarely disregarded:

EXCELSIOR!

The number of otherwise intelligent human beings who hang about the hall, reading silly notices, and catching well deserved colds, is most distressing.

An occasional straggler drags himself up the staircase, generally in futile search for the canteen, which confronts him in the garden.

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Otherwise oil and fuel upstairs waste their sweetness, and the rooms and pictures their welcome.

Come Upstairs and Risk Meeting

THE CHAPLAIN.

As Kipling so finely says:

“What shall they know of Talbot House
Who only the ground-floor know.”

The Chaplain's Room was as interesting as the Notice Board. It required a certain tenacity to push through the crowds that thronged the hall and stairway, but as the strains of song and piano receded one arrived before a door marked “Chaplain's Room” which bore a striking parody of Dante's Inscription over the Gates of Hell: “All rank abandon, ye who enter here.” From within came roars of laughter and the door opened to show a tea-party in progress—an experience not a whit less interesting than anything in Alice in Wonderland. The room was crowded with men of all ranks, generals, majors, corporals, privates, some lolling against the mantelpiece, others perched on the window ledges or seated round the little table on which was arrayed the paraphernalia for afternoon tea. Over the whole hilarious company presided a rubicund gnome in a clerical collar whose jests and repartee had the room rocking with mirth. And the humour was not only verbal. The nervousness of a Devon lad standing beside a brigadier-general would be completely forgotten when Tubby offered him a box of matches, in which all the matches were stuck to the bottom; and across the room a purple-faced major of artillery, having also received a box, elicited yelps of glee as he tried to light his pipe with matches that were only intended to smoulder.

P.B.C. was always ready for a rag, and he found kindred spirits in many men who felt the need of easing their tension and letting off steam in practical jokes. Concerts and debates showed him at his best when his deep voice, quaintly individual, had everyone doubled up with delight. He seldom rested, and it was precisely this unrelenting energy and humour that electrified the House and made his name a by-word in the Salient. It was said of him that

he was the one man in France who could make men forget the artificial and temporary distinctions of rank, and make them "meet upon the higher ground of their common manhood."

He had a way of making shy souls feel decently important. How often has a nervous youngster, joining an uproarious and sometimes distinguished gathering, had his qualms allayed by the jolly host coming forward with open arms as if to greet his greatest friend. "My dear old man, how ripping to see you!" It is not so much the words themselves, as the way he uttered them that made a stranger, awkward and ill at ease, straighten his shoulders; here was one who cared nothing for man's stripes. If he were a lad fresh from school then they would all fall to a discussion of the rugger or cricket prospects; if he were from a village or a factory it was a safe bet that there would be someone who knew his part of the world. Who could help but feel at home in such an atmosphere?

Some of those who drifted in from the lonely places of the world had never had such a time in their lives. And they came from everywhere. Big men from Australia, South Africa, Canada, New Zealand, reticent Scots and North countrymen, self-assured Londoners, and in the later stages of the war the cheerful breeziness of the American. One hot Sunday afternoon a gigantic Australian dropped in to tea. He had ridden from Armentieres on a push-bike to see the padre for a few minutes. He stayed exactly half an hour, which he shared with the other people, but he went away with a light in his eyes that reflected the feelings within.

There was one inflexible rule impressed upon all who came that way—"Today's guest is tomorrow's host." The troops were reminded, quite definitely, that what had been done for them today, they were expected to do for the men that came in tomorrow. And as the spirit of the host is not displayed by him who sits awkwardly in his house it behoved the men to adapt themselves as quickly as possible to the atmosphere of their surroundings. This done they were able to study and learn something about the men upon whom Tubby relied for the smooth running of Talbot House.

These changed from time to time, some staying longer than

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others, but there was one who was permanent, so permanent, in fact, that he was to stay with the padre, except for a brief absence, for the rest of his life. He was Arthur Pettifer, known universally as the "General". The narrow face with its walrus moustache and sleek hair was as typical of England as the South Hackney from which he sprang (the descendant, the name implies, of Roman Legionaries settled in Britain) and, in case you had doubts, the Military Medal and sundry ribbons on his tunic were evidence that he had shared the valour of his race. He had joined the Army as a band boy in the year of Tubby's birth and nearly thirty years later found himself in France with the last twenty-eight of the famous Buffs, one of whom, on a very black night, had been heard to snort: "Well, if we're winning this bloody war, God 'elp the losers." His mood was not brightened when ordered to report for batman duties to an unknown chaplain at a place called Talbot House. He stoutly affirmed his inability to meet any domestic requirements, and then, characteristically, developed an exceptional talent for household management.

His powers of acquisition were astonishing, though questionable. He was absolutely incapable of deceit in the common exchanges of civilian life but his household management in the Army was occasionally picaresque, to say the least. Tubby grew fearful to express a need lest it bring fulfilment and disgrace. In an unguarded moment he once said that the Chapel needed a carpet. Soon afterwards one arrived at the House, but inquiry revealed the painful fact that it had been filched from next door. He protested strongly only to receive the reply:

"They won't be wanting it, sir; they *do* say as how the family are in the sou' of France."

Tubby was firm. "General, I can't possibly say my prayers on a stolen carpet."

"Well, sir, if yer won't 'ave it in the church," responded Pettifer, "it'll do lovely for yer sitting-room."

Even this insidious alternative was dismissed, and the carpet restored to its rightful owners. Some days elapsed and then, one morning, the "General" countered heavily:

"Yer remember that there carpet, sir?" Tubby assented.

"Well, the A.S.C. 'ave scrounged it nah."

Pettifer may have been a shadow of his master—a description of which he was proud—but let it not be supposed that he was a formless reflection. He was an extremely vital shadow that made itself felt not merely in the House but through all the narrow streets of Poperinghe. There was not a child in the town whose face did not light up at the sight of Pettifer's spare figure wending its way on a mysterious errand that would ultimately benefit the commissariat or the furnishings of the House. He it was who hurried them to shelters when the bombardments became heavy and supplied them with toffee at the most unexpected times and places: and it was they who conferred upon him the title of "le General" which greeted him wherever he moved, and, after the war, remained as much a part of his honourable equipment as the Military Medal.

There were others, but their attachment was temporary. At one time the numbers of the staff actually reached seventeen (in the spring of '17) and it was by no means unusual to enter the House and find a field officer tidying up the ash-trays or sweeping a carpet. The best known of these casual assistants was Leonard Browne, Captain of the Royal Army Medical Corps, whose duties with the Royal Engineers allowed him ample time to devote to Tubby and his extraordinary household. He first heard about Tubby one Sunday morning. Quite by chance he had dropped into the House and had heard Neville Talbot, aglow with enthusiasm, tell of a wonderful padre who was soon to return to the House which he had helped to create. It was mere curiosity that brought him back a few weeks later to observe the man who could so impress a fellow chaplain. From where he knelt in the Upper Room he found himself looking at what appeared to be a stocky, elderly figure who was so engrossed in his task at the altar that he was totally oblivious of the congregation. It was at that particular service that Tubby appealed for helpers and Browne decided to volunteer.

When he went round to the Officers' Club next morning and routed out what he had imagined to be an elderly cleric he was amazed to discover a man as young as himself, sparkling with humour and health. He was propelled by the chuckling parson into the garden where they talked things over. The doctor learned

that the House was self-supporting but the finances had become so involved that an order had been received from Army Headquarters that unless audited accounts were produced in a fortnight Talbot House would be closed. But who was to do the auditing? By this time Browne had unreservedly succumbed to the charm of this ebullient cleric who assumed, in a most flattering way, that he was not merely a medical officer but a qualified accountant sent by God to assist the Old House. What could he do but offer his services? The offer was received in Tubby's customary manner: "Well done, old man, splendid, splendid," and he was promptly ushered over to the House.

At first blush the job had looked simple enough but he quickly realised his mistake. A large account book was brought out and laid on the table together with innumerable scraps of dirty paper. These were receipts from far and wide bearing inscriptions in Flemish, French and English. Closer investigation revealed the appalling fact that the columns which divided the account book in the prescribed manner were simply ornamental as far as Tubby was concerned; as a concession to orthodoxy there were five or six headings written across the page—"Furniture," "Garden," "Entertainments," etc.—under which appropriate items had been listed. Beyond that genius had been sublimely indifferent to the fettering lines that hamper less gifted mortals, and a good many of the transactions had evidently taken place by cash alone.

A favourite practice apparently was to empty the cash box, cadge a ride to Boulogne, and spend the afternoon making purchases for the House—the joy of acquisition more than compensating for the inaccuracies of the book-keeping. It was all too obvious that the imagination of P.B.C. was more elastic than the average book-keeper's but, unfortunately, Army Headquarters was notoriously lacking in imagination too. The job was really hopeless but as Browne had given his word he decided to go ahead and trust to luck which happened to be on their side. The Army Headquarters was duly informed that the books were being audited and the matter, in the usual army way, ended there. The books were *not* produced and the House was *not* closed. It was Captain Browne's considered opinion after twelve months' experience that only a man without any idea of space, time or

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money could have run Talbot House . . . and the fact remains it was a huge success.

But looking back it can be seen that if Leonard Browne is to be valued it is as a medical officer, not an accountant. Tubby's indifference to time threatened on several occasions to endanger his health, and it was only the doctor's vigilance that saved him. He seldom rested properly and a most familiar sight in the small hours of the morning was to see him cat-napping in an arm-chair in the hall or library. For the rest, he was either running the House, conducting services, resolving the problems of the troops, making rapid expeditions to points far and near in the interests of the Buffs and Bedfords, or embarking on his weekly pilgrimage to the "slums" (as he called the front line) to visit his beloved batteries.

Sometimes, though, even his cyclonic energy subsided and he was retired to bed with a temperature of 105, protesting weakly: "My dear old friend, I can't possibly afford the time. I really must see Smith of the Devons. And then there's that perfectly splendid Sergeant Holloway of the R.E.'s who is coming in to see me." It was of no avail. The great dread of the Talbot House staff was "evacuation to the base" and Tubby usually saw reason, if reluctantly, when it was pointed out that he would probably end up by being packed off to a medical unit. Pettifer was posted outside the door to prevent a stream of visitors, and he took his duties so seriously that he even challenged the doctor who was consoled to find that someone at least was observing his orders. One thing was certain—the doctor could expect no co-operation on the part of the patient who regarded the confinement as a plot on the part of nameless forces to undermine the morale of the House.

While it was the broad policy of the House to refrain, as far as possible, from mentioning the war it was obviously out of the question to ignore the fact that Talbot House was uncomfortably close to the front line. Shells crossed and re-crossed the roof day and night, and bombs dropped in the garden, in the street and, occasionally, on the nearby houses. One bright summer's afternoon in 1917 a big naval shell blew the house next door to smithereens. The Old House shuddered, swayed drunkenly for a moment, and then shivered back into position; the seven hundred men who crowded the building and garden were thrown into momentary

confusion but when Tubby rushed into the lounge, expecting to find blood and casualties scattered in all directions, he discovered only one victim—a man who had been lolling in an easy chair sharpening a pencil with a pocket knife had cut his finger! It is a matter of record that during the whole of the war there was only one fatal casualty within the House. A Canadian had come in with his brother to write a joint letter home when a 5.9 blew sideways into the building and he was mortally wounded. Other than that there were a few alarms and no casualties, and Talbot House rocked its way through the explosions and earthquakes of four years.

For those who loved books Tubby saw to it that the House provided a priceless avenue of escape—the library was the most remarkable on the whole of the Western Front. It occupied a bedroom in which, for most hours of the day, sat a custodian almost obliterated by a vast miscellany of volumes that had overflowed into the centre of the room; his very desk was constructed of the larger books, and to the right and left of him were piles of caps, left as hostages for books that had been borrowed. In this room could be found almost anything from frothy Ethel M. Dell to the more sober diet of Paley's *Horae Paulinae*; a man made his choice and deposited his cap, but if, as sometimes happened, he valued the book above the protection of the cap Tubby would receive it after the war from a prison camp in Prussia or some other place. Even in those days uniforms concealed the oddest types, but in no way were they more easily identified than by the books they requested. Tubby recalls with a chuckle the afternoon he was chatting away with a St. John's undergraduate who was a wireless operator for the duration. There was a knock at the door and it opened to admit an insignificant private with the tab of a Royal Field Artillery driver on his shoulder. He looked very much the worse for wear and the padre asked him what he wanted, suspecting that it would probably be money.

"I hope I'm not disturbing you," replied a cultured voice, "but I could only find a small Cambridge manual on palaeolithic man in the library. Have you anything less elementary?"

Tubby's astonishment was nothing to that of the wireless operator who blurted out:

"Excuse me, sir, but surely I used to come to your lectures at Oxford?"

"Possibly," answered the driver, "mules are still my speciality."

It was such repartee without rancour that saturated the House with humour and friendliness, and gave to the place a reality far deeper than the muddy monotony of the trenches. But the important thing is that this spirit was not confined to Talbot House: P.B.C. gradually extended it throughout the Salient. He discusses his work and its problems quite freely in the letters he wrote at the time, but ignores the unorthodox methods he occasionally employed to widen the sphere of the Church's influence. There was the time when he accosted an unsuspecting Quartermaster Sergeant on the Vlamertinghe road during a traffic jam and, having won his confidence, asked him if it were possible to gather a few of the men of his battery together for a voluntary service on the following Sunday afternoon. The sergeant, a man of action, went straight to the C.O. and a battery church parade of "all ranks that could be spared" was ordered to be held in the wagon lines.

The afternoon was hot it so happened, and the Padre late! By the time he arrived, perspiring and not a little uncomfortable, the curses were distinctly audible, and the descriptions of the mayhem best suited to Anglican parsons quite unprintable. But once the service began the atmosphere changed subtly. The black looks faded, muscles relaxed, and an indefinable homeliness injected itself into the gathering, the genuine friendliness of this unusual cleric, with his untidy uniform and chuckling comments between the verses of the hymns, gave a curious beauty and significance to phrases most of them had been accustomed to reciting mechanically. The parade ended with a unanimous request for another. It may be added, that the second was not compulsory, nor any of the others that followed through the years—it was not necessary. And from that afternoon the 141st never lost sight of the Padre; as the younger officers moved from the 141st to take charge of other batteries these, too, were brought within the orbit of Tubby's influence.

Almost every Thursday morning for three years Tubby and Pettifer set out for "Cat Farm," a bleak wilderness in which was billeted the H.Q. of the 141st (East Ham) Heavy Battery. In

the evening a service was held in the old barn, and afterwards Tubby would talk to the men in a serio-comic manner that was as entertaining as it was inspiring. Those were memorable nights with death but a few yards away from the laughter of hearts that had been momentarily freed from fear by a jolly priest who had learned the secret of losing his own fear in the needs of others. It was on one such occasion, after the laughter had been lost in sleep for most men, that he sat all through the night with an officer of recognised gallantry who sobbed with fear under the foreboding that the next mission was to be his last. One never knew what such nights might bring and the best protection, after all, was the helmet of faith.

In the morning (it was nearly always a Friday) Holy Communion was celebrated in the little chapel that had been fixed up in the granary, and something of the atmosphere of Talbot House stole through the doors that opened out on to the desolate, shell-pocked fields. He and Pettifer then proceeded to the Ypres asylum (the temporary quarters of a detached section of the battery), where a brief service would also be held. Those were dangerous missions, despite the jocundity of P.B.C., and he freely admits that, for most of the time, his heart was either in his mouth or his boots. But this did not prevent him from carrying such impediments as he thought necessary for the spiritual and material welfare of his "Parishioners."

He was never one of your fortuitous travellers who could circle the globe with a tooth-brush and a pair of pyjamas; he believed in anticipating every contingency and, as a succession of harrassed aides through the years can ruefully confirm, the precautions were usually pretty elaborate. Fortunately, transportation was not difficult (how could it be with an Army truck every ten yards?), and the "Gen" seldom failed to arrange for the delivery of the "spiritual munitions" to coincide with their own arrival. These included, by the way, his Communion case (always referred to as the Crown Jewels); a sandbag holding hymn books and Communion services; Edmund Street's portable harmonium; a huge bag of magazines and books; a baby Pathé Cinema, with tins of films; and various edibles such as chocolate, tins of cocoa, etc. Sometimes Tubby and the baggage became separated but the

astounding thing is not that it disappeared but that it invariably turned up in the right place—and the right place might be a barn, a dug-out, a gun pit, or, on one occasion, the sands of Wissant. Whatever the weather, and it could be desperately foul at times, however heavy the shell-fire or gas attacks the incumbent of Talbot House unfailingly made his rounds; it is not too much to say that during the dreadful months of the "big push" he was the most valuable morale builder on the Salient. If anyone doubts it a few minutes with some of the men who survived those days will convince them that Time has not distorted the memory of the little chaplain.

During the years that he made the weekly journeys to the three main batteries in the advanced sector there was one thing that he carried on his person and from which, come what may, he was never separated. It was a small Pyx, of unembellished design, that had been sent out for use in Talbot House by the people of the poorest street in his district in the parish of Portsmouth. He never took the sacrament from the House to the front line—although this surely would have been permissible under the circumstances—but preferred, as he put it, "that the unity of each battery should be knit up in the use of the Pyx, hallowed by all for all." It became more than ordinarily sacrosanct not only because it accompanied him on his errands of salvation, but because it was with him during the most moving experience of his war-time chaplaincy.

He had Celebrated on this particular morning at the Headquarters of the 154th, which had recently advanced from the old farm at Dickebusch to St. Eloi, and then proceeded with Pettifer down the long, slippery slope that led towards Ypres. They reached the Field Station—Transport Farm it was called—whence they were able to survey their chances of crossing the field that separated them from an embankment where the men of the forward section sheltered—in a number of large caves or tunnels that had been cut into the earth and reinforced with planks to prevent them collapsing on the inmates. The field, a bare hundred yards from the station, was still smoking from the intense bombardment that had ceased only a few minutes before and which, at any moment, might recommence. P.B.C. and the "Gen" decided to make a dash for it, and with arms pressed hard into their sides they zig-zagged past the shell holes across what seemed to be the

longest field in the world. The subaltern in charge was awaiting them. They were led, breathless and spattered with mud, to the largest tunnel in which a number of men had been gathered. As they entered the shelling started again and because some appeared to be gas shells the gas curtain was dropped behind them.

The scene is scarcely comprehensible to those whose eyes have been mercifully spared such sights, but its gruesome dignity did not escape the one who Celebrated that morning. "No eyes," he wrote, "which have looked upon these things in actuality can ever hope to find their like in any church on earth. The intense reality, the humble eagerness, the unity of aim, the thought of one another, the constancy of friendship thus for ever knit, were like great shafts of light streaming upon a dark and narrow way, whereon a Figure all-commanding stood plainly to be seen. The crouching men, outlined in candlelight against the background of the oozing boards upon the yielding carpet of moist clay, made this the Food of Immortality indeed, delivered within the sepulchre itself. Death stood without and knocked, but Christ within forbade his instant entry; for, even as we knelt, such sounds came very near."

Some eighteen men received that morning and when the Act was over Tubby and the subaltern moved towards the curtain. Something resisted the effort to move it. Both pushed together, and it fell aside to reveal the dead body of a young soldier that had half-fallen against it. He was about eighteen and so gently had death touched him that he appeared to be asleep. He was well-known to both of them for the officer had taken a special interest in the lad, and only two weeks previously P.B.C. had taken him down to the Old House for his Confirmation. Instantly both realised what had happened. He had been manning the farthest gun and had probably remained behind to effect a minor readjustment; he had then followed his comrades hoping to be in time to Communicate. But before the curtain could be drawn aside he had died—died without a cry while his friends received.

They placed his body to one side, so that the men might not see it as they left the cave, and then Tubby inquired if there were any who had not had the opportunity to receive. The officer told him there were four signallers who were unable to leave their instruments. They were stationed fifty yards away on a part of the

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embankment that was being heavily shelled. He made his way to where they were crouching on the side of the slope, and proceeded to minister to them in the open.

Five men knelt in the act of contrition while death screamed in the sky. He said a few words of the prayers and then, just as he felt for the lock to release the lower part of the Pyx for the second administration, the heavens above them were torn to shreds. A huge shell had burst fifteen feet up and the whole earth seemed filled with jagged steel and its deathly whine. The five men had removed their tin hats and knelt there entirely unprotected—but not one of them was touched. It might even be said that not one of them was frightened for, with the prescience that acute danger gives, they knew that Christ was there. Completely oblivious to all but the task in hand the Padre ministered the Chalice, replaced its cover, said the Lord's Prayer, and rose to give the Blessing.

He stumbled down the embankment to join Pettifer, and together they passed on their way. That day a group of soldiers under shell-fire had seen "the glory of the Lord."

CHAPTER V

THE traveller who now journeys from Poperinghe to Ypres gazes upon a countryside that gives slight indication of its brutal past. It is pleasantly undulating, the roads are lined with trees and the fields are dotted with farm-houses from which columns of smoke climb lazily to the sky. But standing on the hill that looks down the gentle slopes to the spires of Ypres he will notice that the land is pitted here and there with craters, large and small, in which the grass is growing thickly. Some of these were deliberately blown by the Allies to afford protection for their troops on ground so water-logged that it was impossible to dig deep trenches. The hill, which was occupied by the Germans, is like the rim of a saucer, and, if the traveller has imagination, the great hollow of the countryside below becomes a sea of mud through which hundreds of thousands of troops drag infernal engines to stay the enemy offensive. For four years British troops, under the direct observation of the Germans, lived and fought in the hollow of the saucer, and over the whole desolate landscape hung the acrid odour of war and death. Many died gallantly storming the moderate heights or fighting stubbornly, bloodily, for an inch or two of ground; thousands more died just as bravely, but ignominiously—drowned in the mud which enveloped everything like a black evil ocean.

The pace of the war, judged by present standards, was dreadfully slow. Men stood for weeks up to their knees in water, their feet rotting, their guts collapsing, and across the liquid fields would drift clouds of gas—pale innocent-looking clouds seldom higher than a fully grown man—that would bring scalding tears to the eyes, and a gasping choking struggle for breath as the deadly fumes seared the lining from the lungs. Mutilated companions might lie all night beside a man, and the smell of death was sometimes more fearsome than the threat of death. At night the supplies were carried across duck-board tracks and along the shell-

swept roads by men who were supposed to be resting in support; it was a task as costly and dangerous as a spell in the front line.

Gradually new names grew up in that region of Belgium—Hell-fire Corner, Paradise Alley, Essex Farm—commemorating some act of sacrifice, occasionally a local joke, but, more often than not, an episode of regimental gallantry. The line for the defence of Ypres extended from Langemarck, through St. Julien, to Hooze, Hill 60, St. Eloi and Wytschaete; during the first Battle of Ypres the line had been so thin that the cavalry had to send their troops to fire down one road, gallop to the next road and fire again, to give the impression of a continuous line until reinforcements arrived. Once the line “hardened” mobility of movement was largely lost, and it became a war of agonising attrition. When old soldiers talk of the “mud and blood of Flanders” they are not exaggerating—they flowed thickly together for four years.

Amid all the filthy miseries of life in the Salient it seems a little incongruous to find Tubby writing about the virtues of his garden. “The weather is perfect,” runs one letter (the sun had peeped through at last!), “and the wall fruit trees and roses need a lot of wisdom that is beyond me. The Band is coming into the garden as soon as we have got it straight, every afternoon more or less, so we shall be cheerier than ever.” But it must be remembered that Poperinghe was the only place for miles around that offered a chance to relax. Not only the garden of Talbot House, which on summer afternoons was brown with the khaki of idling troops, but the tea-cups and cakes, the maps of home on the wall, the books and chairs and carpets, the absence of military formality and the apparent friendliness of everyone helped men to forget the nightmare that was only a few miles out of town. Lord Plumer once said that in all his experience he had never known a place so vital to morale as Talbot House. In the grimmest period of '18, when Kemmel Hill had fallen to the Germans, a memorable message was flashed back by the Assistant Provost Marshal:

“Essential to the morale of the Salient that Talbot House remain open.”

Of course Tubby could talk about his roses and fruit trees; it reminded the men of better days, made them cheerful, and no

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doubt Headquarters, in its more rational moments, thanked God for a man who kept his head and could rise occasionally above the thought of war.

But if Tubby kept his head there is no denying that his heart often ran away with him. In those days he seemed incapable of thinking ill of anyone (his prejudices in later life were frequently violent); it sometimes looked as if, in the stress of war, he had thrown aside his critical faculty although, on the other hand, his observations on life were often very shrewd. But as far as the troops were concerned the fact that they were in the service of the King, and actually risking their lives, absolved them from all baseness in his sight. Tubby speaks and writes eloquently of the camaraderie of the trenches and the fine link of friendship that held the men together in their selfless task, but he is inclined to ignore the other side of the picture—the bitterness and the cynicism, the utter disillusionment and, at times, a spirit of active revolt. He was not unaware of it, of course, because too many men had broken down and confessed their tortured thoughts to him, but he looked upon these emotional eruptions as momentary and nothing to do with a man's primal attitude towards war and his duty. In a way he was rather like a popular bishop who complains that he can never understand the talk about empty churches because whenever he visits a church he invariably finds it full; and similarly, Tubby's radiant humour and simplicity were such that men always felt at their best in his company and, for the moment, became what he imagined them to be "perfectly splendid fellows, such jolly chaps." To repeat that phrase from one of his letters: "no prospect pleased, but man was perfectly glorious." Nevertheless, there were those who felt far from glorious, and some whom he greatly respected and who were attracted to him and Talbot House have recorded their impressions of those days in bleaker hues. Such a one was George William Clarkson, leading light in the Oxford branch of Toc H after the war, who opened his heart to a friend in a letter he wrote in September 1926.

"Clarkie" was the son of an insurance agent in the little Yorkshire town of Conisbrough and at the age of fourteen he went to work as a clerk for the Great Northern Railway. In 1914 he joined the Guards (he was then eighteen) and proceeded to France.

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It is part of the policy of the Guards never to allow a man capable of thinking for himself in the ranks and the C.O. promptly put Clarkie in Brigade Office on the grounds that he could type. He had many close calls, but he managed to survive four years of war. In the last year he put his name down on the famous list of Talbot House customers, officers and men, who, if spared, wished to offer their lives to the ministry of Christ and His Church; this led to the foundation of the Knutsford Ordination Test School in which Tubby played a decisive role. After the war Clarkie went back to school, found his way to New College, and eventually took Orders in the Church of England.

All of which is sufficient to show that he was not a superficial person, and he describes an aspect of life and thought on the Salient which is not much featured in P.B.C.'s records:

"I have no atom of what might be called sentimentality about the war," he wrote to a friend in 1926. "Neither have I any personal faith in all this talk about friendship and the fellowship of the trenches and all that. I do know, and few can know better, the terrific and almost terrifying existence which the older men gave to a raw and not very efficient recruit; I know to what lengths men would go to assist one another in difficulties, but I also know to what lengths they would go not to be found out or to push the blame on another—and both attitudes were the result of the system.

"Then you will see, too, how Toc H comes along as an embodiment of what really matters. It is the most exact opposite of the system. It thrives on the individual answer to the individual call that comes from Christ to men. That is why it is of God, because all things that are of God rest, fundamentally and for ever, on the values of the individual—he is valuable to the system just in so far as he is conscientiously and by God different from his fellows . . ."

It can be seen, even at this early stage, that Talbot House was evolving into something more significant than an army club; it was acquiring the strength of a philosophy which, simple though it may have been, was capable of articulating the thoughts and

hidden desires of men. There were thousands who, like Clarkie, had scant patience with organised religion as they had known it but who, in spite of themselves, felt drawn towards a mystic Something that held meaning amid the meaningless slaughter.

The Upper Room was the gauge of the relation between the Innkeeper and his customers. For every one that came to the House out of motives of selfishness half a dozen would come seeking a fellowship that was a little deeper than the chit-chat of the billiards and card tables, and some of the noblest regarded the calm of the Chapel as fitting preparation for dangerous tasks. There were no doubts in Tubby's mind when he wrote: "Old Talbot House was no confused conception. It knew the part God meant it to perform towards the multitudes of homeless men, wave after wave in the low Flanders plains. It spoke to them of home, of love, of duty, it breathed the courage of Christ upon them. Here they laid up their griefs, their fears, their burdens. Hence they emerged, comforted and renewed. What they found there depended on themselves, for every guest of half a million soldiers that came to Talbot House was free to choose. No orders went the rounds. No martial mandates moved men to climb to the old Upper Room. A hint dropped here and there in conversation, a sense of curiosity, a friend's example, or a long-latent aspiration to follow more nearly, kept the old hop-loft rarely undermanned."

If there were an occasional unreality in his appraisal of men's motives the important thing to remember is that there was never, at any time, a lack of reality about his own mission.

When men live close to violence the sanctions of ordinary living are brushed aside, and the supernatural seems not only near but, at times, almost commonplace. The mass vision of Mons, the occult experience of numerous men week by week may be dismissed as war-time psychosis, but the fact remains that large numbers of all ranks and temperaments felt the reality of the unearthly, and heard the footsteps of other worlds. It was natural that such should turn, when opportunity afforded, to the Upper Room in Poperinghe for there could be found One who gave courage to hearts that were afraid, and some reasonableness to the jig-saw puzzle of man's existence.

The primary miracle of the Salient, many are inclined to think, is that the Chapel remained intact. The Royal Engineers after a



THE UPPER ROOM AT POPERINGHE



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From the red chalk drawing made in 1920 by the late Sir William Rothenstein

careful inspection declared the floor to be thoroughly unsafe but Tubby, loathe to accept their caveat, invoked the opinion of two London sappers who danced upon it, and cheerfully assured the Padre that it would stand anything. Tubby thought further inquiries unnecessary, and forthwith announced the opening of the Chapel in the hop-loft. There was often cause to doubt the wisdom of the decision but destiny was tolerant and the Chapel held together. According to one account: "On Sunday nights, for years on end, with a hundred and fifty full-grown men squeezed in somehow, and twenty more upon the stairs, the Chapel rocked like a huge cradle, until we were fain to ask a congregation drilled in habits of simultaneous movement to kneel and stand in lingering succession. On occasions of shelling and bombing, or (once) of both of these amenities together, the Chapel might readily have carried the congregation with it."

The Chapel was a modest sort of place at first, resembling far more closely its original character of a hop-loft than that of a house of worship. But as it took its place in the hearts of the men they responded with gifts and workmanship that adorned it with beauty. The Bishop of Winchester's gift of hangings, arranged to form a baldachino above the Carpenter's bench, set a motif of restrained elegance. The original altar-piece was a reproduction of Perugino's "Crucifixion" which had been deftly framed in the top of a broken wicker table tinted with gilt, but this was afterwards replaced by a crucifix made and presented by the 120th Railway Construction Company. An exquisite silver chalice, a veil of priceless Flemish lace, an altar-frontal of green and gold, the portable harmonium presented by Major Street, and two great standard candlesticks made out of old carved bedposts by a Canadian gunner . . . all through the war such gifts came to the Chapel, and gradually bestowed upon it the intimate loveliness of a sanctuary. Without being sentimental it can be said that if ever a place were shaped by Love it was the Upper Room of Talbot House, and, what is more, the love often came from where you would least expect it; this, I think, partly explains and excuses Tubby's readiness to ascribe only the loftiest motives to all in sundry. His letters to his mother glow with pleasure as he marks the stages of development in the Chapel. Early in 1916 he remarks:

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Life is very happy. . . . The little Chapel is getting known and loved, and folk turn to it naturally, e.g., this afternoon an utter stranger, an officer, came in and asked shyly if he might go up to the Chapel and be quiet. I, in response, asked if I could be any help if I went up to him there. He accepted gladly, and after a little time I followed him. It turned out he had just had news of his father's death at home. The news had been delayed in reaching him owing to his regiment moving, and the funeral was to be at 3 this afternoon. So at 3 in the Chapel I held the Burial Service, with a quiet congregation of one; and he went back to his regiment I think with his sorrow somewhat assuaged.

Yesterday's services were full of joy and promise. The Chapel is really needed, and since we scrubbed and white-washed it last week, is amazingly beautiful. We have made stained glass windows out of a roll of Sunday School pictures.

Sunday was the most formidable day of the week and yet the one from which he drew the strength that kept him going. As his fame and influence spread his services, especially at the Great Festivals, were packed to capacity and the strain became back-breaking, but he bustled through with undiminished cheerfulness and the troops forgave him his frequent lapses in punctuality—after all, even Tubby could not be in ten places at once. He described a typical Sunday to his mother:

I look forward to a really happy busy day tomorrow. Let me sketch my programme:

8 a.m., I shall probably attend the Celebration here and assist a fellow Chaplain, and all the Corps people will be there.

9.30 a.m., a small parade of a company of Labour Battalion here; they are great pals of mine and have lent me an excellent L. Corporal who has been working day by day in the garden for weeks past.

10.30 a.m., a full parade of another Labour Battalion, my old one.

11.30, lunch (with some rhubarb out of the garden).

1 p.m., start in a car for a siege battery.

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2 p.m., service there: and harmonium carried in car.

3.15 p.m., another siege battery.

5.30 p.m., service at Corps Headquarters.

6.30, Evening Service here.

It sounds a jolly day; and I shall try to talk about Mothering Sunday most of the time. By a fortunate coincidence, I have just reached the 3rd Word from the Cross, the course I'm taking on Sunday evenings.

That was the kind of routine, never lessened but sometimes amplified, that he kept going for years. On Easter Day, 1916, which he considers the happiest of his ministry, he had ten Celebrations from 5.30 a.m. until noon with which he dealt single-handed. The Front Line was very lively at the time and it was hoped that by having a succession of services some of the men might be able to get in at odd times during the morning; by a surprising turn of events every service was thronged and the floor below the Chapel was full of men waiting to replace those already above. All that Tubby could do for six hours was to Lift and Break and Give; and yet an ineffable peace enveloped the whole House as though, he recalls, a voice had said: "It is I: be not afraid. Handle Me, and see."

That afternoon he was carried off to a service at Group Headquarters on the Elverdinghe road which was immediately followed by a rapid trip, under shell-fire, to one of the batteries at Fantasio Farm where another service was held. He returned to the Old House on the stroke of six-thirty to find the Chapel packed for Evensong and the news that Colwell, one of the best loved orderlies of the House, had been hit in the lungs and was asking for him at No. 17 Casualty Clearing Station on the Abeele road. By 8.30 p.m. he was jolting along the Abeele road and, not knowing exactly where the hospital was, he left the car and travelled in the general direction by crawling under a train and along the sleepers with a prayer on his lips that the engine driver would not pick that moment to remember his duties. He emerged, oily and a little breathless, from between two wheels of the engine, found the tented casualty station, and the patient doing better than expected. He arrived back at the House near midnight, ready for supper and

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bed. It had been a twenty-hour day, joyful and exhausting, but not untypical.

There has been a great deal of talk during recent years about "fox-hole religion" and, no doubt, the First World War also had its proportion of "shell-fire converts." But, by and large, the men who came to the Upper Room were sincerely anxious to reconcile what faith they had, or were about to get, with the fantastic shapes life was assuming under the pressure of war; to many the brief sojourn in the Chapel was a prelude to eternity. To others it was the beginning of a new life that was carried over into peace-time. The cynics and slackers seldom got beyond the billiard-room; it was the sensitive and curious who found their way upstairs.

It is impossible to understand Toc H as a post-war movement (and, therefore, the personality of Tubby, the Founder-Padre) without grasping the spirit of Talbot House in Poperinghe. Quite frankly, it was the attempt of an Anglican parson, faced by the terrible challenge of war, to acquaint all kinds of men with the meaning of fellowship in Christ. In those years that P. B. Clayton plodded around the Salient, and ministered to his "customers" in the House, the troops, even the toughest of them, began to realise that the Christ of Tubby was no relation of the caricature on church windows. He was vital, alive, and intensely interested in all that concerned them, especially their minds—even the dirty side of them for they needed His healing hand. Anyhow the Christ of Tubby was something startlingly new in the experience of these men and, in the words of one old campaigner, "we was sold on Him."

Tubby claims that at no period of the war were the officers of any army up to the British standard in early '16, when the flower of the amateurs stood side by side with the old regulars who had resisted the first onslaughts. But, alas, their numbers were quickly decimated and Talbot House would have been gloomy indeed but for the indomitable cheerfulness of its host. Many of the killed were well known in the Old House, their fresh laughter had filled its rooms, but if each casualty had become an occasion for lamentation the very purpose for which the House had been founded would have been defeated. The dead were honoured in

the Chapel, but elsewhere in the House everyone tried to forget the war and its bereavements. Yet when the names came through Tubby had some bad moments, and they had been coming through for months and continued to do so—Keith Rae, Sydney Woodroffe (whose sword and Marlborough Football Cap were to go to All Hallows), Archie Forrest, Alec Johnston (whose articles in *Punch* were long remembered) and, most grievous of all, his boyhood friend, Cecil Rushton, in the May of '18 when the new Handley-Page he was flying caught in some wires over Bruges and crashed. He and his companions were dragged from the wreckage and photographed by the enemy, and when, six months later, Tubby saw the photograph it was, he said: "so fearful that . . . a friend had to walk me to and fro far into the night till kind exhaustion quieted me."

But war is not all tragedy, it has lighter sides, however fragmentary. There were the wonderful thrills of unexpected encounters with old friends, the sudden joy of a new and worth-while friendship. It was on an old canal bank at Ypres during a terrifying bombardment that he first met Herbert Fleming. The Senior Chaplain of the Guards was wearing gum-boots, riding breeches, and a tucked-up cassock and Tubby never saw a man so gloriously happy as he stood there, wiping his gold spectacles, and the shells falling like rain. He might have been about to open a parish bazaar. It was a posture so unconsciously nerveless that P.B.C. was dumb with admiration, and a friendship was born on that noisy afternoon that was not even disrupted by Fleming's death in 1927. "When my own picket is relieved," he said in paying tribute to the man whose wisdom had meant much to Toc H in its formative years, "Fleming's is the first hand of all that I shall seek to grasp." It was in the Salient too that he met once more Guy Sydenham Hoare whose nonchalant charm had so fascinated him in the Portsea days.

It happened in this way. Tubby, whose itinerary was taking him all over the Salient in a series of breathless rushes, had arrived with the "Crown Jewels" at the 141st Heavy Battery, adjacent to the Brielen crossroads. The service over, the officers were sitting down to breakfast when a tall, spare figure was seen lounging across the fields. As he came in the Major half arose, murmuring

"Siddy—", then, remembering the presence of the younger officers, bade one of the subalterns to give up his ammunition-box-seat to Major Hoare. It was Siddy all right, superbly debonair, his long figure adorned in the uniform of a Major of Artillery that ill-concealed the bearing of the country squire.

When the enthusiasm of Tubby's greeting had died down Siddy took his place at the table—a kitchen door covered with several sheets of *The Times*—and contributed his slightly stuttering drawl to the conversation that had perceptibly quickened since his arrival. It appeared that Siddy, whose military habits were somewhat nomadic, had come to Flanders as a Captain in a Territorial Battery but, upon becoming their Major, he had decided that the only way to secure a complete picture of the war in its various phases was to investigate for himself. This resolution was never actually put into words, but every now and then when things had quietened down in his sector, he would drift off murmuring that he was going to "see how So-and-so was getting along" or to "look at the old war." His perambulations, conducted at any hour of the day or night, became a widespread topic of conversation besides an unending anxiety to his fellow officers in the zone. The only reason he was not arrested as a spy on a dozen occasions was because he was so patently British that not even the most suspicious could suspect his credentials—the half-closed liquid eyes, the drooping gingery moustache, the slow Etonian stutter.

On this particular afternoon the conversation between the two Majors took the form of question and answer, anxiety making Siddy's interrogator a trifle peremptory. Siddy's drawling rejoinders eventually established the fact that he had been away from his battery for two days, had gone to visit the Sherwood Foresters but found the Durhams had taken over, and had spent the previous night in No-man's-land chatting with a wiring party—"that wire was rotten stuff, full of kinks."

"Have you had any sleep?" inquired the Major. "Do you want any breakfast?"

"Oh, yes, I . . . I had some sleep on the way down, w-w-with old Trelawney—he just t-took me in and gave me some to go on with, t-thank you. But y'know, I-I don't mind if you insist on breakfast."

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While Siddy consumed his bacon and eggs and the remains of the tea the others began to discuss Jerry's habit of strafing the cross-roads early each morning, and what position would be safest in the vicinity of a bursting shell. Various opinions were expressed and the Major was about to add the touch of authority when Siddy straightened himself, stretched his long legs, and in a drawling voice that held no trace of a stutter dropped a philosophical bombshell:

"You know, you can't get hit if you will only keep horizontal. That's the secret. Fellows are always perpendicular or bending down when they get hit. If you can just lie down, nothing will get you. 'Pon my soul, it's a fact."

There were murmurs of dissent, someone facetiously remarking that it wouldn't be a bad idea if the whole bally army lay down and then the Germans would surrender through sheer boredom. Siddy, undeterred, blandly continued:

"Look here, I tell you what—I'll go back to my battery"—("Hear-hear," from the Major)—"I-I'll go back to my battery, and come back here again tonight." (The Major grunts.) "I'll bring back my camp-bed and a jolly little folding hut. I'll put it up by the Brielen crossroads and sleep there. I shan't get hit, you'll see."

Shortly after breakfast he bade them all graceful adieux and sauntered away, but reappeared at nightfall with an odd contraption which, when unfolded, proved itself to be the Armstrong Hut, together with a camp-bed and blankets. Unperturbed by the remarks of his fellow officers, he had the hut erected a few yards from the crossroads, the focal point of danger. Night closed in and, supper finished, Siddy melted into the darkness, and the rest folded themselves in their blankets.

It must have been just before dawn when suddenly, without the least warning, there was an ear-splitting crash, and all around was an inferno of flame, noise, and jagged steel. Tubby grabbed his trench coat, swung his gas-mask into position and made his way to the guns where the men, whom he knew by names and nick-names, were already at their numbered posts, tense and alert as they thundered their replies into the night. The whole scene in the sickly, quivering light of the flashing guns was weird and horrifying; the scarred trees lifted their sinister branches like

arms in prayer, the silhouettes of ruined farm-houses, the strained faces of the gunners and, every now and then with the lessening of the noise, the groans of wounded men. The end of the world seemed very near. The call came for stretchers and Tubby, no longer a watcher, became immersed in the frantic task of trying to ease pain and sooth the dying.

The dawn broke into full daylight and the bombardment almost instantly ceased, except for an occasional bark from a 60-pounder. The Major strolled over to Tubby.

"Good morning," he said, "thank goodness that's over. It is, I think—more or less."

They walked across the fields towards the stretchers. All of a sudden the Major stopped short.

"Great Scott, I'd forgotten. What about Siddey? Don't you come. I'll go and see what's happened."

"Please let me come," said Tubby. "I'd rather know."

The Armstrong Hut had been badly mauled. The roof was off, the walls gashed, the door, still on its hinges, was half open. The Major pushed it wide and stood in the doorway with P.B.C. straining over his shoulder.

"He isn't there!" gasped Tubby.

"Good God, he *is*," answered the Major.

They entered the hut, and knelt quickly beside the figure wrapped in blankets under the upturned bed.

"Is he alive?" asked the padre. "Where is he hit?"

The procumbent figure stirred, and from the depths of the blankets there slowly emerged the well-bred face of Major Guy Sydenham Hoare, Royal Garrison Artillery, and while the eyes danced with mocking laughter he casually drawled:

"W-w-where am I? Ah, I remember. The Boche was pretty lively last night. 'Pon my soul, it seemed like Piccadilly on New Year's Eve. B-but didn't I tell you that chaps who are horizontal don't get hit? When it got too damned noisy I rolled off the jolly old bed and slept on the floor. Wasn't too bad, y'know."

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The Archbishop of Canterbury, Randall Davidson, visited the House in the early days and his easy friendliness drew from the

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few remaining scoffers that "there might be one or two decent blokes among the clergy besides Tubby Clayton." P.B.C. was more spontaneous in a letter home:

Wednesday was a great success here, about 150 Chaplains gathering in the garden and having tea, talk, and service. After they had gone, we had the Confirmation of thirty-seven candidates. Cantuar was perfectly delightful, and as simple as a Mission preacher with them.

The visit was happily timed because, in view of the fact that the war was likely to be prolonged, the dearth of candidates for the Sacred Ministry was causing considerable alarm to Church leaders. Even before the war there were ominous signs, and the headmaster of one famous school had openly declared that whereas in former years he could look for at least two-thirds of his sixth form taking Orders, he was now fortunate if a couple expressed the desire. The reasons were several, but in the main it was not intellectual defection so much as inability to face penurious stipends.

"The War," wrote Tubby a few years afterwards, "with its re-assertion of the vertical divisions between nations erased, or at least softened, the horizontal divisions of class; and the time was ripe for a great forward movement on the part of the Church itself towards the ideas already seen in the working at Kelham and Mirfield. In *The Challenge* in May, 1915, the vision of a great recruitment from all ranks of the Army, resulting in colleges of men of every type and social standing, united by the experience of war, was first set forth. And in Talbot House the men were first enrolled. Later the lists grew beyond the scope of private responsibility and were transferred to Headquarters."

Among the names on the Talbot House list were, surprisingly enough, several sailors, as well as pilots of the infant Royal Flying Corps. Actually, the soul of the R.F.C. was born in the old House where in 1916 the first meeting was held in Tubby's room at which it was decided that the new Air Arm should have appointed to it the first six chaplains it had ever known. But sailors seem a little beyond their element in an inland town during war-time until

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it is remembered that parties of them frequently went up from Dunkirk to see the Line, and Tubby naturally became their host. On the original Communicant Rolls in Poperinghe some of the very finest men were sailors. In 1917 the Royal Naval Division, the 63rd, came up to Flanders Fields for the appalling battle of Passchendaele, which opened on July 31st and lasted until November when the mud made further movement impossible. In estimating the foundation of Talbot House it should not be forgotten that the Navy played a considerable part in its creation, and were well represented among its patrons.

It was through this association with the Navy in Flanders that Tubby became the guest of the Grand Fleet at its hidden base in Scapa Flow. He had been going all out for months, simply refusing to slow down with the result that by the summer of '16 he was a complete wreck, and had to be sent away on sick leave for three months. It was during this enforced absence that he visited the Fleet in Scotland. The invitation came as a courtesy gesture to the Army for entertaining a Naval party that had been sent by the Admiralty to observe the war in Flanders and report. The party descended on the House soon after it opened, and Tubby thenceforth acted as their chief host in Belgium. A raiding party was staged for their amusement, and they co-operated with such heartiness that one of them acquired the D.C.M. When they departed for the Fleet again they asked the Army Commander, General Sir Herbert Plumer, to allow two parties of officers, N.C.O.'s and men picked from the Second Army to repay their visit. Tubby was included in the invitation and was the only Army Chaplain to whom the privilege was permitted.

The first party arrived just in time for Jutland, and three good Gunner officers from Flanders went down in the *Queen Mary*, which blew up. A few days later Tubby reached Scapa Flow to be greeted with the news that Lord Kitchener, aboard the ill-fated *Hampshire*, had been drowned at sea.

CHAPTER VI

THE week as a guest of the Royal Navy was one of the more pleasant of Tubby's war-time experiences. But it began discouragingly. He reached Inverness on a Tuesday morning and was told by the Senior Naval Officer that the wire consigning him to a ship had apparently not arrived. The prospect of being responsible for a lost parson obviously did not appeal to the Commander who barked orders right and left in search of the missing telegram. It turned up in the pocket of an unfortunate clerk who, when the S.N.O. had finished with him, looked as if he wished he had been drowned at sea. In the meantime the one train to the furthest North had left and things appeared forbidding until the Commander, a resourceful fellow, held him for lunch and proposed an alternative scheme.

Early that afternoon, armed with a letter from the S.N.O., he left for Invergordon where he caught his first glimpse of the big ships in the gathering dusk. He reported to the Rear Admiral who promised to dispatch him North on the morrow and then placed him in the care of his secretary, a Flag Lieutenant. After tea they went on a shore inspection during which, to his utter delight, he ran across several of the boys from his Portsea parish.

He travelled all day through the Highlands, reaching his destination towards evening. Reporting to the Naval office for instructions the first two people encountered were Portsea boys!—"resulting embrace prejudicial to all disciplinary traditions." A car took him down to the jetty where he boarded a tug that looked woefully inadequate for the menacing seas that raced and swirled beneath huge bluffs of cliff. An hour later he was standing in the Ward Room of an old battleship moored permanently in the harbour as a kind of first-class waiting-room for official visitors; all around were hundreds of ships, of every class and description. It was an impressive and heart-warming sight for a man who

loved the sea but, through no fault of his own, was condemned to be a soldier for the duration.

A twenty-minute run in a smart motor-boat brought him to H.M.S. *Ajax*. He climbed aboard to find himself surrounded with saluting marines and junior officers one of whom conducted him to the Ward Room where the Commander and the Captain awaited him. The welcome was a model of what such welcomes should be and, within a few minutes, he was thoroughly at home. He asked if he could have a glimpse of the ship at night and was immediately put in the care of a gunnery officer, and together they made the rounds. The unobtrusive comfort and efficiency greatly impressed him, and he wrote to his parents regarding that night:

It was a wonderful tour. All the main flats were fitted with hammocks slung everywhere—close on 1,000 men were sleeping there, including about 100 boys on a lower deck. The gun crews of the 6 inches were sleeping in their casemates, ready to man their weapons at a moment's notice. Here and there talking was still going on, but was rebuked by my guide with a kindly word. Warmth, tidiness, and simple comfort were apparent on all hands. Everything had obviously been so minutely thought out that it was incapable of improvement, given the needs of the case. I was deeply struck by the interest shown by all the officers in the personnel; as I learnt from the men afterwards this was particularly true of this ship. The life of the men is full of monotony and noise and hard routine. But what could be done, was done. A little canter round the open deck and then ourselves to bed. As the guest of honour, I received the Captain's spare cabin; a paradise of comfort, carpeted, lighted and warmed with dainty electric fittings and a private bathroom attached, in which I revelled. So to sleep, a sentry at the door and the ceaseless pacing of the watch above, in the safest place in the world.

He awakened each morning to the strains of the ship's band playing patriotic airs. An orderly brought him tea, turned on the bath, and laid out his khaki uniform in apple-pie order; lying

between the warm sheets the Innkeeper of Talbot House could not help contrasting the lot of the naval officer with that of the soldier. Each in the ultimate issue was hazardous but, saving disaster, the life of the naval man was certainly the more comfortable.

By the end of the week his love of the sea was fortified by a detailed knowledge of at least one ship. From breakfast (with "the early birds") to sundown he was kept on the move. They had him puffing and grunting up a fifty-foot mast which swayed until his head reeled—he had omitted to tell them he did not like heights; he stuffed wadding into his ears while the big guns exercised with dummy shells, and crawled along turrets from which he emerged with his khaki uniform bespattered with oil; he went down shafts, plodded through endless steel corridors and hissing engine-rooms, inspected boilers, turbines, stokeholds, was handed from this instructor to that instructor and eventually finished up, more dead than alive, in the arms of a young Torpedo Lieutenant who showed him "his darling devilments with the pride of a mother." If P.B.C. did not understand how His Majesty's battleships operated it was not the fault of the Royal Navy.

His sojourn with the Navy came to an end, and it was a sad moment when he was taken down to the gun-room to say a few words to the gentlemen midshipmen, and then returned to the senior ward-room for the farewells. "At 10.15," he wrote, "I am leaving the *Ajax* and much of my heart behind and soon after the boat lands me again on the *Imperieuse* and thence I clamber down to the diminished splendour of an upper berth on the little old *S. Ninian*, against an early start next day."

He reached Perth at 7.30 p.m. to be greeted with the sad news that the last train for Queensferry had gone. It had been a rough journey from the North, even by war-time standards, and his mood was far from cheerful as he entered the large restaurant in which sat a solitary diner. He was a high-ranking Naval officer and by the unconscious habit of the week Tubby walked across the room and sat down opposite him. Before they had reached the cheese the Navy was fully aware of the predicament of the Church, and had advanced an admirable suggestion. Why not let the Navy take over and convey him to Rosyth from where he

would be taken to the *Queen Lizzie*—a Navy vessel lying in the stream—and accommodated until arrangements could be made to get him to Edinburgh. From there he could find his way to London. Tubby acceded with rising enthusiasm and, a few hours later, was warmly shaking hands with everyone in sight on the *Lizzie*. More Portsea lads turned up. One of the delights of the Scapa Flow trip was the discovery that the parish of Portsea had scattered its sons with a generous hand throughout the whole of the Grand Fleet. On this occasion they all met after breakfast in the Chaplain's cabin when there were present, according to Tubby: "Mr. Nightingale, C.P.O., George Potter, and Charlie Kennett. Agenda: two years arrears of conversation; carried *nem. con.*, that it is good to be together again."

He was by now well accustomed to the idiosyncrasies of the Senior Service and allowed himself to be hurried around the *Queen Lizzie* on a tour that touched more details than could be absorbed by any one man. He was, however, particularly impressed by the beautiful chapel which had been created by removing a gun, and could not help remarking that the average chapel on a ship possessed an atmosphere, an element of life, that was all too frequently lacking in its army counterpart. Perhaps the explanation lay in the fact that sailors are usually less self-conscious about their religion than other people, and will respond to religious appeal and environment more readily. Their gaze, shall we say, is adjusted to the limitless and when, day after day, the horizon meets the sky without interruption God does not seem far away. This attitude of mind was to be of inestimable value to Toc H, especially in its early phases, and some of its sturdiest champions were to be drawn from the Navy. The final scenes of that most memorable week are described in a letter written from the British Officers' Club in Boulogne:

At 12 midday I lunch with a merry ward-room party who are going ashore to play the gun-room at cricket. We assemble slowly afterwards in the boat alongside, strangely clad for the most part in flannel shorts and seaboots, it being the rumour that the landing is as difficult as at Anzac. By the use however of a dinghy towed astern, we beach on a practicable place; a few

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hundred yards further on, waiting on a grass track by the shore, a magnificent Rolls Royce, the property of one Lieutenant Curzon, carried its owner and myself through a huge private park to Edinburgh. Here, with an hour to spare, I alighted at the corner of Princes Street, which is not looking its best, since the shops are shut and the rain comes down. An hour for sight-seeing was therefore not very promising, but resolving to try a guide-book at the station and read up the city in comfort my mind reverted to the address of Mrs. Bell, the mother of a dear motor machine gunner, a Confirmation candidate of mine in Poperinghe; the address in my pocket-book—11, Barony Street—turns out, according to the instructions of a friendly Scotch sergeant, to be only ten minutes from Waverley Station.

I never spent a better half-hour. She lived in the top of a big Peabody Trust kind of place, with shy children playing on its stone stairs, by whose wondering guidance I find her, and when I have explained who I am, we sit and compare notes on Jamie, and see him and his in all sorts of a self-conscious series of photographs.

Then back to Waverley, Southward bound, Newcastle, York, Peterborough, and King's Cross; and the ever open door of 69 at 11.30 p.m.



He arrived back in Poperinghe in September 1916 after an absence of three months. One of his persistent phrases had been that "if you sow clubs you reap clubs, but if you sow the Kingdom of God you reap the Kingdom of God," and its truth had become obvious while he had been away. The qualities that had made Talbot House unique in the annals of war somehow disappeared with the departure of Tubby. Several padres, it is true, tried to fill the gap but they tackled the job as just another club that needed the conventional hand of a chaplain to keep it on the rails; they conspicuously failed to catch the spirit of the place, nor could they be expected to feel the same eager affection as Tubby for something he had created and fashioned along lines distinctively his own.

It is not surprising that Neville Talbot, the Senior Chaplain,

should write in July when the rumour that P.B.C. might not return had depressed everyone: "T.H. is at present pretty well a desert . . ." The authorities, it must be admitted, were alive to the situation although for a time they had actually been of two minds whether to send him back to Poperinghe or elsewhere, but common sense prevailed in the face of diminishing morale and Tubby was ordered to report back to the old House.

It was not long before the Salient was aware of his return: vibrations of energy penetrated to its furthest reaches as the rotund Innkeeper, with the "Crown Jewels" under his arm and Pettifer at his heels, embarked on the ever wider circuit of journeyings to outlying "parishioners." He followed one Battery to Calais, back into action at Reigersburg, thence to Kruisstraat, and finally to Dormy House at Zillebeke for the "big push" in July. Travel was neither easy nor safe but he seldom, if ever, lost touch with a unit he had once known; it was this sort of thing that gained him the Military Cross. Miraculously enough, he contrived at the same time to maintain in the House an uninterrupted series of daily services, concerts, debates, whist drives, chaplains' conferences—obligations which, to use his phrase, "stretched out like the line of spectral kings before Macbeth." Quite obviously such a routine was only made possible by the strictest economy of time and a division of labour. Tubby's idea of temporal economy was to reduce his sleeping hours to about three—which still left him panting about half an hour behind each appointment—and the division of labour was achieved by Neville Talbot's offer to look after the House on Fridays. . . . "Neville," wrote the Innkeeper in deep appreciation, "is a pillar of fire in the darkness of this present world."

The tremendous sense of urgency that bound him to this inhuman time-table was born of the conviction that the war was not really one of shells and bayonets, but entirely a question of character. Accepting the hideousness of war, what remained to be seen was whether the character of the Allies was nearer to God than that of the fellows on the other side—and it was the job, the prime job of the padre to see that it was. But for all his inflexibilities of purpose there was not the slightest trace of fanaticism; he remained unflinching cheerful about it all, and wrote:

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Each week of course brings its deeper work—interviews, confessions, and other opportunities of which I am not worthy. It's a happy life, isn't it?

The munitions explosion in London sounds very grim; but if the world will go mad, it must expect to suffer. The whole business sometimes seems sheer insanity on a huge scale. It's queer to see the Boche prisoners trotting around here in their red forage caps, looking eminently pleased with themselves.

All the same, heavy shelling made continued habitation in the town distinctly unpleasant. Harold Bates, one of the six original chaplains with Tubby under Neville Talbot, had his leg shattered when leaving the House one Sunday morning, and Major Street's walking stick was blown in half by the same shell that wounded two brother-officers as they approached the front door. Never far removed was the thought that the structure of the building might not be able to withstand the daily heavy shocks, but if the authorities were worried, and they were, it did not subdue the bonhomie of the men who crowded the House; in fact, to relieve the congestion it had been found necessary to open a house near-by for officers, with Neville Talbot to charter their fortunes. It was steadily maintained till the evacuation of Poperinghe in the Spring of '18.

This was not the only expansion. A move more consonant with the missionary spirit of the House was the establishment of Little Talbot House at Ypres in the cheerless Autumn of 1917. Tubby's eyes had long turned in that direction and the knowledge that certain sturdy friends—Military Foot Police no less—were running a kind of cocoa tavern with materials supplied by a friend of the House, encouraged the hope that at the first opportunity T.H. could move on an organised basis. In the early months of '16, when the shelling of Ypres was particularly vicious and indiscriminate, concentration in one spot was clearly inadmissible: the best that could be done was for services to be held at various points by Divisional Chaplains, in the Infantry Barracks, in a cellar in the Rue de Dixmude, and in the house afterwards acquired by Talbot House. During '16 and '17 Tubby himself held weekly services in the Prison—temporarily the Town-Major's headquarters—and

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remained on the alert for an opening to move in. The first lull in the gaunt nightmare of perpetual shelling occurred in the Autumn of 1917, and Tubby grabbed one of the two houses still standing in the Rue de Lille—the Post Office, deprived of its function, being the other. The next day a notice was pinned on the Bulletin Board of Talbot House:

LITTLE TALBOT HOUSE

was born yesterday in Ypres. It stands (more or less) in the Rue de Lille, and was once a large lace factory. The red brick frontage on the road is quite imposing, but the back premises are not quite what they were. However, there are six rooms upstairs, and a convenient and capacious cellar.

We are sending up some stuff from the old House, and passers-by must look in and see Mr. Goodwin, the Chaplain in charge.

Church tithe for the present may be paid in kind, the kind being roofing-iron and sandbags.

Gas and water already laid on.

14.11.17

The first attempts to furnish were not successful. A lorry load of furniture, dumped in one of the vacant rooms, was blown to pieces a few hours later by a direct hit—an unpleasant set-back in a land where such things were hard to come by. "We moistened the lips," comments Tubby, "and brought up a second load. With this the House opened, and from November to April fulfilled its task ideally, under conditions increasingly dangerous. One morning, when I arrived on a visit, the House was literally ringed with new shell holes; and even as Pettifer and I approached it, part of the outer wall, weakened by continual concussions, fell of its own accord. Yet within, the work went on uninterruptedly."

Little Talbot House was simply an extension of the parent House. Upstairs were the familiar reading- and writing-rooms, although Jerry's daily "Hymn of Hate" made relaxation a little difficult, and the canteen, dispensing the usual variety of innocuous beverages with tea in the forefront, was surprisingly well patronised. Below stairs in the "catacombs" were the Chapel (later removed to the upper floor) and the billets and kitchen; at night the Chapel was

curtained off and the rest of the cellar became another reading-room or an air-raid shelter, according to the mood of the hour. Considering the diabolical conditions under which it existed its brief tenure in Ypres—a mere five months—was an enviable example of courage and efficiency under the leadership of R. J. Goodwin, who displayed an aptitude for Innkeeping in the best Gospel tradition.

He and his staff arrived in "Pop" late one Sunday night with the news that machine-guns were in the streets and the town billets evacuated by order. The Germans were rapidly advancing towards Ypres. It had been a bright, gallant interlude in a year of gloom, and only God knew what dividends it would pay in the future.

The proportion of deserters in the First World War was small, but during the dark months of '17 and '18 there was a sharp upward curve. Four deserters gave themselves up in Talbot House in a week with the pathetic belief that the Padre could somehow save them from the consequences of their folly. In the weeks preceding the terrible attack on Passchendaele the men became very "jittery" and rancour and ill-feeling flared up between officers and men, some of the latter deserting. Tubby started "grousing circles" to which the men were encouraged to come with their grievances, and a few of the more helpful officers dropped in to listen and advise. It was really all a question of nerves; the men were tired out and apprehensive. Everyone knew that the difference between success, with moderate losses, and bloody carnage would be decided by the weather; if the weather held luck was on the side of the Allies, if it broke they had better remember their prayers. The slopes would be churned to a quagmire, almost impenetrable under fire, and the men would die like flies. The preparations for the great attack had gone smoothly enough, but the strain of waiting had become well-nigh intolerable; frayed tempers had the men snapping and cursing from morning till night.

It was at this most inopportune moment that the Powers-that-Be decided that an official visit ought to be paid to Talbot House. Someone from the Chaplain-General's office would come to Poperinghe, and address a meeting with a view to encouraging the men and bolstering morale. Fortunately, it is forgotten who was sent but Tubby, with his usual energy, managed to assemble a

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large crowd of officers and men. Headquarters sent a car to meet the distinguished visitor on a flawless summer's day, and the House was packed with people awaiting his arrival. The great man's car finally drew up outside the white door and the faces in all the windows, besides the crowd on the street, witnessed his welcome from Tubby. It took the usual form of expressing pleasure at the visit which they had all anticipated and concluded with an observation on the beautiful day. "Yes," replied the great one in a loud, hearty voice. "It's a fine hot day, but a little rain now to lay the dust would be very pleasant." The remark was audible to all those men whose very lives in all probability depended upon the weather holding out, and whose nerves were already in tatters watching the barometer. Tubby and his guest walked into the house in dead silence. The talk was not a success, nor did many stay to shake the visitor's hand. The eminent cleric never learned the reason for his unresponsive reception although, of course, it is a matter of history what the weather did in that awful August of 1917.

During the critical months of those last two years of war Tubby responded to the demand with such disregard for physical limitations that on two occasions at least his health was endangered. The fever, which frequently troubled him, cropped up, and is mentioned by him in a letter of December 12, 1917:

I write on my birthday from an easy chair a few miles back from Talbot House, in fact in an Officers' Rest Station. What brought me here was that on Saturday I got another touch of the old fever, which only lasted till Monday, since when I've been normal though slightly pulled down. So the doctor wants to try and get to the bottom of these periodic attacks, and sent me here for a day or two's rest, and also to have my blood tested for malaria.

But back in "Pop" we find him once more on the old routine—three hours sleep and galloping non-stop through the rest of the day. There were now 2,000 names on the T.H. Communicant's Roll besides the thousands of men who frequented the place but had no Church affiliations. And, as if this were not enough, he

regarded it as his duty, whenever necessary, to minister to the few remaining civilians in the town. He deplored his ineffectiveness in this respect feeling that the barrier of language was too formidable for any close understanding. "My French," he remarked, "is still shamefully bad, though quite unblushingly fluent. If only I had taken the trouble to learn it properly, I should have found it not only useful, but of real value in helping me to understand and sympathise with much of the native life around here."

The population of Poperinghe was now fluctuating violently but whether full or empty the intensity of the German bombardment mounted steadily in preparation for their last "Big Push." A fairly good gauge of the variations in population is supplied by Tubby's statement that the attendance at weekday evensong during one week of October, 1917, averaged a hundred a night with all sorts of folk coming in—Australians, Canadians (he was undecided which he liked the better, but both immensely), a stray American or two, some British West Indians and two Chinese—but the following Easter he writes in the *Tales of Talbot House*: "On Good Friday there were only twenty at the Three Hours' Service, and, mindful of warnings, we avoided a big evening lantern service in the House. On Saturday, among other things, some Easter offerings of timber for the dug-out are noted; and on Easter Day at all the services only a hundred made their Communion in the House."

The House was no longer a physical sanctuary although it remained a spiritual one; in fact, there were times when it became positively dangerous, especially for Tubby who was so often in the Upper Room, the most vulnerable spot if the House were hit. Curiously enough, it was because of the shelling that he changed an accustomed habit in the Celebration of the Holy Mysteries.

He climbed to the Upper Room one morning early and found several awaiting their Communion. He had administered the elements and returned to the altar when, without the least warning, the big guns opened and the first shell screamed across the high roof, plunging with a roar into the field behind the garden. The House shuddered like a living thing, from top to bottom. In the flash of blinding clarity that comes only with acute danger he saw, he says, the results of the next shell—the broken altar and

splintered benches amid the tangled, smoking heap that was once the House and, dented and desecrated, the paten and chalice lying there with the sacred wine trickling over the ruins. He felt no fear, only distress at the hideous vision. He picked up the chalice and drained it, and hastily consumed the blessed bread. The next shell came instantly, following the same line of flight but a slight access of elevation carried it to the switch roads beyond, the real target.

The bombardment continued fiercely while the service was completed. The men clambered down the ladder and went their ways, and the Innkeeper knelt in the Chapel alone to say a prayer of thanksgiving. Like most Anglican priests trained in the Prayer-Book tradition he had always retained the elements until the final Peace had been bestowed, but, in the danger of the moment, he had, by an odd coincidence, reverted to the primitive practice of consuming them immediately after the administration; a practice, incidentally, that is resuming vogue today. And that morning (uninfluenced, of course, by ancient fashion which has come again) he revised his mode to mark the day, pledging to do what he had done in the stress of the moment whenever he should Celebrate.

The House was never, at any time, damaged to the extent that it was put out of commission, but the probability that it would be increased alarmingly with the growing offensive. One shell carried away the concert-hall platform, two fell in the garden, and a bomb penetrated the water-conduit; when Tubby returned from a short post-Easter leave (a New Zealand padre, Humphrey Money, had been left in charge) he found the situation had still further deteriorated. The Chapel was, for the first time, moved downstairs and all apertures heavily fortified; the patriotic pamphlets which for years had flooded the House were at last found useful for filling sandbags. Pettifer won the Military Medal by his gallantry in rescuing, at considerable risk, three survivors from a near-by building (Cyril's Restaurant) that had been completely demolished by a direct hit, and, shortly after Sir Douglas Haig had issued his famous order—"Our backs are to the wall"—the town was evacuated and Talbot House ordered to close.

There was, as it happened, a brief respite during which "the House continued in the greatest happiness to administer comfort,

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natural and supernatural, to troops still moving through the deserted town." The shops and estaminets that had hitherto survived all war's vagaries were at last closed and Poperinghe, famed for its gaiety and stubborn courage, became a ghost town, a transient point in the March of Destruction. On Whit-Tuesday, May 21, nearly a month after the fall of Kemmel Hill to the Germans, imperative orders came through that the House must close. Tubby's convenient policy of putting the telescope to the blind eye was no longer feasible and he, with his staff, sadly turned the key in the front door for the first time since the old House had proclaimed its mission of hospitality to all who passed that way.

And yet the letter he wrote to his mother on the eve of departure is full of hope:

It feels rather like a Bank holiday too! Mac and I got up at 9 a.m. and breakfasted at 9.30, and he is now doing my T.H. accounts (good man) while I am writing letters.

Then we journey hand in hand to Dingley Dell, a delightful orchard a mile from here, where we have pitched four Armstrong huts, and propose to live for the time, and run a Talbot Park.

The authorities are determined (quite kindly) that the House should be evacuated now. For a fortnight it has been the only house open in the town; and as the town is now altogether out of bounds, it seems only folly to remain.

We have cleared everything worth having, even the electric light fittings; and all the valuables, Chapel furniture, etc., are safely on the train in a truck all to themselves. T.H. will probably re-open here or elsewhere in a month or two. Meanwhile I shall live happily with Macgrath in Dingley Dell, and work round my outside parish more easily than from here. It is in one way of course heartrending to leave the House. On the other hand, there is nothing for it now to do; and we can sing our *Nunc Dimittis* with a quiet and thankful heart. We have been wonderfully guarded, guided and blessed; and though many of our children are now at peace, there are many still in this world who have here found Him and been found of Him. *Laus Deo.*

Much love, dearest mater.

His optimism was justified. On September 27, 1918, the House re-opened and remained open until January when the premises were again occupied by the owner, M. Coevoet Camerlynck.

The Third Battle of Ypres began at dawn on the following day, September 28, when the Second Army and the Belgians, both commanded by the King of the Belgians, swept the Germans from the Ypres Salient in twenty-four hours. From then on the rapid advance of the Allies left the House "high and dry." A few detachments dropped in now and then but they were more anxious to be on their way than to linger in "Pop"—they were all infected with the fever of Victory. This was THE END, after four long years, and men were in no mood to stand about, however inspiring the company. But to some who remained long enough Tubby spoke his final words in the Upper Room. He spoke of death and destruction and denied that they were identical, he spoke of those who had gone before, and of those who remained, and concluded by saying: "So, tonight, here in this old Chapel, the spiritual centre for three years of the Salient now finally freed, between us and those who have freed it there lies that great belt of desolation we know only too well. It is hideous still, but full of fear no longer; for those who have at last broken the ring of death are far beyond it now: out of sight, because victorious; vanished, because advancing. Desolation, it is true, divides us but neither we nor they are desolate. We go on our way here for the time, happy for the knowledge that their feet, as they go forward, are on ever firmer ground."

On the Eve of the Armistice he was invited down by Bishop Gwynne, the Deputy-Chaplain-General, to discuss plans for the organisation of the School for Service Candidates for Ordination. It was in Talbot House that the Service Candidates Ordination Fund was started, and it was there too that those servicemen who had resolved to devote their lives to Christ and His Church if they survived the war first put down their names. The Church evidently realised that if it were to work and witness effectively in the post-war world it needed power, men of recognised calibre and training who could talk the language of the people and understand the problems of the "returned man." But "training" required money, buildings, teachers. It was the task of P.B.C., and others, to find those things.

CHAPTER VII

KNUTSFORD PRISON is a bitter memory to some men. Its great walls were gloomy and the narrow cells, with their plank beds and dingy gas-jets, were the final degradation. But there are some for whom Knutsford evokes memories of fellowship and the common life lived in pursuit of an ideal. These today are scattered across the globe, doing their jobs as Anglican priests in the most unlikely places, but, it must be admitted, when they assembled at Knutsford Prison, in Cheshire, on a certain day in March, 1919, for the opening of the Ordination Test School their feelings were mixed. "There was nothing about it which did not make you shudder," F. R. Barry afterwards wrote. "We shall never forget the horror and disgust struck into us by the first sight of our new home." But as Tubby had selected the home judgment was suspended; his proven magic was such that it was generally felt that he could transform even a prison into a place of light.

The whole adventure of Knutsford seems incredible. It was, by any count, sheer audacity to take several hundred men of different educational and social backgrounds, lump them together in a disused prison, and then proceed to prepare them for the great universities and theological schools. But many of those men, whose ministry has splendidly enriched the Anglican Communion, would have been totally lost to the Church if the Innkeeper of Talbot House had been respectful of convention or intimidated by obstacles. Tubby had always been scornful of the "gentleman tradition" which drew its clergy from only a sealed privileged section of society. He repeatedly urged a return to the primitive practice (which had never been wholly abandoned, although badly overlaid in the nineteenth century) of drawing the clergy from all ranks of society. There were but two qualifications—

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character and education, and the education, whenever necessary, should be provided by the Church.

Although this view had long been held by Tubby, it is no exaggeration to say that the article that appeared in *The Challenge* of May 1915, inspired him to action. He began seriously to recruit those men who had expressed the desire to read for Orders if they survived the war. They were a miscellaneous crowd, including everything from temporary colonels to gentlemen rankers, but they were one in the desire to rebuild society by Christian methods. Major Edmund Street, who had presented Tubby with the portable harmonium he carried around the Salient, had died on the Somme in 1916, and his relatives, in memory of him, had sent a cheque for ten guineas of which ten pounds were used to start the fund for ex-service candidates. The other ten shillings was spent to purchase a small picture which still hangs, with Edmund Street's name attached, in the Upper Room at Poperinghe.

The list grew rapidly under the persuasion and guidance of P.B.C., and when it reached five hundred (a startling missionary effort on the part of one man) the matter was reported to the home authorities. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York, on behalf of the Church of England, accepted the offer and also the grave responsibility, financial and otherwise, which their acceptance entailed. The Talbot House list was thereupon transferred to General Headquarters and details of the scheme, together with the archiepiscopal cachet, were made known to the chaplains on the various fronts. Many additions were made to the list from the Salient and from expeditionary forces in other theatres. But the point is, that the whole scheme for Service Candidates, as it was afterwards called, originated in Talbot House, and the first schedule of training was drafted by Tubby in collaboration with George Bell (later Bishop of Chichester) and John Macmillan (later Bishop of Guildford), the "liaison officer" between the Deputy-Chaplain-General and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Armistice brought decisive action and allayed any fears that the Church, with familiar caution, might temporise. Two schools in France, one at Radinghem, and another at Le Touquet, were established for officers and men. The Rev. E. K. Talbot, M.C.,

C.R. (the brother of Neville) took charge of the officers' school and the Rev. F. R. Barry, D.S.O. of the other ranks, at Le Touquet. The latter was joined by Tubby and a group of chaplains carefully selected for the task, and together, in the Christmas week of '18, they began the pursuit of knowledge under the oddest circumstances.

The men were housed in the old Machine Gun School. There were neither books nor facilities for educating troops beyond the limits of an army text book. But a staff consisting of men who for four years had enlisted every manœuvre merely to stay alive was not easily daunted; the school became peripatetic and the scholars learnt their alphabets in the wind-swept "lecture-room" of Le Touquet beach. The Greek letters were drawn with a stick in the sand, and the pupils, in perfect military formation, filed past and rhythmically committed them to memory. The tardy student was not popular because his slowness penalised the comfort of the school. However biting the wind across that wintry beach no squad was dismissed until every pupil had mastered the prescribed work for the day. It was astonishing how salutary an east wind could be. "Lectures were also given of the most far-reaching character," wrote Tubby in *Plain Tales from Flanders*, "some by instructors so learned that men rubbed their eyes, and others by intellectual adventurers who skated precariously across the thin crust which covered their consummate ignorance. I was myself notorious for a series of three lectures embracing the history of the world. The first ranged from the Creation to the death of Julius Caesar; the second to the Reformation, and the third to the Armistice. My colleagues, however, were far better equipped, and included some far-sighted men of real capacity."

Christmas 1918 was a jolly affair. It was the first in four years at which Death did not intrude, and the snows beneficently concealed the instruments of war which lay around to remind men of darker days. Archbishop Davidson paid an unexpected visit to the school and, related Tubby, "there he stood in the falling snow and gathering dusk, watching serenely, and as yet well-nigh unrecognised, the unusual spectacle of a Lieutenant-Colonel, much wounded, and with many other signs of war, apparently embracing a Lance-Corporal as though the brotherhood of man had come

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at last upon earth indeed. Times are when my mind turns back to those figures; and I take them as a foretaste of the thing that shall be when the Church has ceased to neglect her men."

Well, the war was over and everyone was stamping to get home and the Church was confronted with the problem of accommodating the men it had promised to train. The burden of finance fell upon the shoulders of Canon Partridge, Secretary of the Central Church Fund, who, in a manner most remarkable, raised nearly four hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds over the years, and enabled 1,600 men to proceed to Orders. But the Church displayed an apt genius in committing to Tubby the responsibility of finding quarters in which to school the men. He received his instructions in language correctly military:

"Rev. P. B. Clayton: In accordance with instructions from D.C.G., you are to cross to England on duty on 9.1.1919 to attend the meeting of the Service Candidates Committee, and to carry memoranda from the Archbishop of Canterbury. You should report to the War Office on arrival, and return to the School as soon as this duty is completed.—F. R. Barry, Chief Instructor, G.H.Q., Ordination Test School, 8th January, 1919."

Tubby replied breezily from England:

"My Dear Chief, the situation here is terrific, but full of hope, thank God. . . . The Archbishop wants me to stop at least till Saturday, and bring you all the winners; and then to come out only long enough to square up, and then return to make final preparations for the school's establishment. . . . Meanwhile I'm almost dead beat. But sursum corda . . . I hope, please God, I've done what you wish. I've tried to, anyhow.—Yours always, Tubby."

Once back in England he hastened to discover his old friend Dr. Leonard Browne, the First Honorary Treasurer of Talbot House, who had been invalided home a year before, and together they set out to find quarters for the Ordination Test School. It was no easy undertaking. England, they found, was lavishly

endowed with large houses and estates but these were either still requisitioned by the government or, with the Armistice, had reverted to private use. A fruitless journey to an American Camp in Winchester was only profitable to the extent that it gave insight into the psychology of their transatlantic cousins—they were as anxious for home as the English and expressed a perfect willingness to trade the camp “on the sole terms that the ship in which they (Tubby and Co.) had arrived might head across the Atlantic.” The negotiations broke down!

It was then that Tubby had a brainwave—he would appeal to the Home Secretary. His urgent request for an interview was met with an invitation to lunch, after which the problem was amiably discussed over pipes. It appeared that his exalted host had many buildings at his disposal, some partially used, others wholly empty; for the most part they were lunatic asylums and prisons although, according to Tubby (in a mood of artful revenge, we suspect) the Home Secretary expressed doubt as to whether the asylums would remain empty after the demobilisation of the General Staff. Tubby agreed, and casually asked if he might have a prison. The Home Secretary beamed, and gave him Knutsford. His mission had been accomplished, and he left Whitehall as an inmate-elect of one of His Majesty’s prisons.

At the sight of Knutsford’s massive ugliness “Tubby’s faith,” to use the words of Barry again, “leapt to its possibilities.” Standing before it with Leonard Browne, a kindred soul, he was “completely fascinated,” a statement that made Barry, Nicholson and the others gape vacantly when they saw it—a shudder was the best they could muster. But his imagination had exorcised the ghosts and populated the bleak yards and cheerless corridors with lively students shaped to a common goal.

The schools at Radinghem and Le Touquet were sent home, given a month’s leave, and reassembled at the prison. The place awaited them in all its native melancholy, but deft hands, directed by men accustomed to every kind of emergency, gradually changed the cells to studies (incidentally, reversing the locks from one side of the doors to the other), and the corridors, crowded with book-laden students, were almost collegiate. Between lectures squads of students fixed the plumbing and lighting systems, and, there being

no lecture-rooms or libraries, erected old army huts on the gravel of the exercise yard. At first the commissariat was a menace and the staff, knowing only too well that the quality of thought usually rises and declines in proportion to the quality of the food, was frankly worried. The problem was solved by importing a wonderful body of W.A.A.C.'s.

There was, of course, no playground but the prison yard, a grimly circumscribed area. With the arrival of summer, however, the neighbours, who had quietly tested the school and found it to their liking, offered facilities beyond the walls, and everyone was perfectly happy. Perhaps the most gentle manifestation of the new Knutsford, as distinct from its past, was the creation of a lovely little garden, ablaze with the variegated beauty of English flowers, above the unsightly place of burial. How many felons had come from the death-house to their last resting-place in a bed of lime no one could say, but a man who had also suffered much, a grievously wounded soldier, spent the hours he could no longer devote to games in covering their shame with the fragrant grace of an English garden.

Knutsford, it must be remembered, was not a "theological college" nor an "army university"; it was a school designed to give men a general education and "test" their vocation for the ministry. The officers' school at Radinghem and the men's school at Le Touquet had been combined, and Knutsford opened with an enrolment of five hundred. It stands to reason that some of the students had had a first-class education while others had barely mastered the three "R's"—but all possessed intelligence or otherwise they would not have been at Knutsford. The school was exceptionally lucky in having a staff that included men of genuine ability who afterwards came to occupy strategic positions in the national life. There was "the Chief," F. R. Barry, later Bishop of Southwell, J. H. Nicholson who was to become Principal of Hull University, Mervyn Haigh, who has lately vacated the See of Winchester, E. S. G. Wickham, a grandson of Mr. Gladstone, who became the Principal of the School, and, naturally, P. B. Clayton, the creator of it all, who taught a variety of subjects on the strength of having taken a brilliant First in Theology at Oxford.

The common life functioned perfectly at Knutsford. The

camaraderie of the trenches was personalised, shorn of its sergeant-major complexes, and given that delicious touch of civilian freedom which makes each man an individual. The School, for the sake of convenience, was divided into Houses, known simply by the lettering in that part of the prison which they occupied. Tubby found himself in House B.IV, with twenty men of mixed military rank, and quickly proceeded to inject his own characteristic qualities into the place. The students were so compliant that, in the full flush of a rag one night, they rolled their respected tutor, helpless with laughter, in a carpet and then stood him up in a corner, crowned with a battered panama hat. They stood around convulsed ~~when~~ suddenly their tutor's mood changed and he began to talk to them about Brotherhood and the meaning of Love. The laughter ceased, the rug was forgotten, and for half an hour they listened spell-bound to a deeply spiritual talk from the trussed-up Tubby.

All very unconventional, no doubt, but men do not easily forget such teachers. It can be truly said that Talbot House in the Ypres Salient gave two things to the post-war world—the Knutsford Ordination Test School and the Movement known as Toc H. Both were complementary, because both were movements rather than stereotyped institutions. Each was born in the bloody clinic of war and not on the smooth baize of a committee-room table. And each, in consequence, was sensitive to the trends of life.

As early as 1917 Tubby, and a few intimates, had decided to establish a club in London that would continue the tradition of friendship forged in the furnace of the Salient. The intention was temporarily stayed by his commitments to the Ordination Test School, but never for a moment was the vision of a transplanted Talbot House allowed to recede into the background. At Christmastide 1918 two thousand cards had been sent out to those men whose names stood on the roll of the Old House, and this was to be followed in September of the following year by the publication of *Tales of Talbot House* in which Tubby, with charming self-effacement and humour, related the experiences of three years of Innkeeping on the Western Front. Its reception was unexpectedly enthusiastic and *Punch* concluded a review of the book on this encouraging note: "It is proposed to found a 'Talbot House' in London . . . if it has a tithe of the humour and charity which this

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book breathes, 'Talbot House,' Trafalgar Square, will be worth founding."

He had been in London during the Easter recess from Knutsford, staying at his eldest sister Belle's flat in Red Lion Square. He used it as a recruiting station, and proceeded to enlist the sympathy and aid of everyone—even the passing cab drivers—who had ever passed or entered the doors of the Old House in "Pop." There were many hearty reunions over tobacco and tea in which the past was relived and the future planned.

An unexpected gesture was made by Lieut. E. G. White, once of the Queen's Westminsters, who offered to take on the job of London Secretary of Talbot House. It was not an onerous position at the time, but he did an invaluable piece of work, with Richard Ridges, in compiling a roll of members of the Old House. In this task, it might be as well to add, they were assisted by Tubby's sandbag without which the conception of Talbot House in England could never have been realised. He carried it from France, and from one end of England to the other, but it never left his sight. It contained thousands of slips of paper bearing the names and addresses of those who had, during the years, made their Communion in Talbot House in Poperinghe. There had been two bags but the other had disappeared during those desperate days of May 1918 when the House and town had to be evacuated. Many of the men whose names were in the bag had been killed, but there were many hundreds, if not thousands, who were scattered throughout England and the Dominions. By virtue of the fact that they had, at some time or other, enjoyed the hospitality of the Old House they were entitled to be "Foundation Members" of the new House in London if they decided to support the venture. An amusing reply-postcard was sent out on which was gaily written: "This will show us (a) where you are, (b) where we are." The response was sufficiently satisfactory for Tubby to write in a letter: "... the replies about T.H. are overwhelming in every sense, but *Knutsford* must come first for six months, at least."

Those six months at Knutsford saw him busy with many things besides lecturing. His bewildering energy had been orientated to peace, and he spared no one, least of all himself. His post-bag was

enormous but by answering each letter—this meant working into the small hours of every morning—he spread a net-work of correspondence over almost the entire kingdom. He also found time to write a series of weekly letters, mainly on the subject of Talbot House, for *The Challenge*, and in April 1919, he gave publicity to his dream for a Talbot House reborn in the *St. Martin's Messenger*, the parish magazine of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, where his friend and cousin, Dick Sheppard, was the Vicar. After an amusing description of the Old House and its priceless spirit, he strikes at the heart of the matter :

What then is to happen to the fellowship of Talbot House? It is plainly too great to lose. Its lovers have a dream of finding some house, say, in Duncannon Street (a difficult task; and the rent thereof, a task not less difficult), of hoisting the old sign-board there and taking the consequences.

The one great fault I find, as a parson, with London is that there aren't enough public houses in the place. There are places so-called, no doubt, but they are tied to one tradition as well as to one brewery. The innkeepers are all too humble to approach you or too proud to be approached. Where is the bustling Boniface of literature? He is bedimmed by a guinea-pig directorate; he is dehumanised by the shadow of shares-cum-dividends.

Our fancy leads us to a cosy house with a good A.B.C. downstairs, and, upstairs, lecture-rooms, library, games-rooms and "grousing" rooms, together with a London Territorial Lethe chamber, where war-like reminiscences may merge wholly into imaginative art—in short, a junior Cavendish Club, though not quite so serious. Its membership (at 10s. shall we say?) would be the 4,000 already on the Communicant's Roll of the Old House (of whom some 500 are in London), reinforced from the Civil Service and Territorial world—a class who, among the faithless, are surprisingly faithful to Mother Church, in inverse ratio, perhaps, to the care she has bestowed upon them.

An inn without beds is like a song without a chorus, therefore we must have a hostel in our hostelry; for in London men are

even more homeless than they were in Flanders. The only financial detail yet decided upon is that, when the water-rate question becomes acute, we are going to draw water in a dixie from the fountains in the Square. You see, we are practical prophets, and the smallest detail is thus completely envisaged.

All this is not yet. First, there is a sentence of six months' hard labour to run; "shades of the prison house begin to close" about Talbot House and its *dramatis personae*—in other words, the Service Candidates' School, now opening in Knutsford Prison, is too great a harvest to admit other sowing yet. Secondly, there is the book on Talbot House to emerge, and its sale will be a wise barometer to tap.

Meanwhile, will St. Martin cover the beggar with its ample cloak, and seek God's will concerning Talbot House in town?

POSTSCRIPT—FOUR MONTHS LATER

Since this article appeared in the spring, the idea of reopening the Old House in London has gone far forward; and in January, 1920, with this purpose in view, Pettifer and I report (with unexpired portion of rations) to O.C., St. Martin-in-the-Fields. After that, we begin to begin, which is all man ever does. No doubt there are lions in the way less benignant than Landseer's; yet it is heartening to remember that lions do not bar blind alleys. So far no patron has made us free of his cheque-book, but St. Martin's has promised to stand our Godfather. One pitch already has been both found and lost. Supported as the house was by a bank and a cable company, this double temptation to high crime is perhaps well avoided. Other sites are in prospect, and it is at least plain that there is room enough for the experiment we contemplate. London is too full of stinging nettles for a dock-leaf to spend time arguing its right to live.—P.B.C.

Here then were the outlines of a dream into which he was already infusing reality. But its development demanded his presence in London, the national heart from which flowed the arteries of any worth-while movement, and throughout the summer he laid his plans accordingly.

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The Ordination Test School continued at Knutsford until 1922 when the Church, deferring to financial stringency, withdrew its central grants. But the day was saved by Mr. Henry Gladstone's offer of Hawarden for the use of a smaller Knutsford. There it continued for something like fifteen years, preparing men for the universities and theological colleges whence they travelled to the far corners of the earth. Knutsford and Toc H, born of the faith of one man, were inseparable parts of a single vision. Knutsford drew its first men from the Old House in Poperinghe and, with fine reciprocity, bequeathed its choicest spirits to the young Movement. Each was God's work because each, whoever the intermediary, was born of God.

CHAPTER VIII

THE flat at No. 36 Red Lion Square was unlike any other in London. The rooms were unpretentious, squeezed together as they were at the top of a narrow flight of stairs, but in them lived a group of men—returned soldiers—who were the apostles of an ideal, the first of their type in the metropolis, and whose brotherhood was bound with the cord of Christian thinking.

There was Tubby, rubicund, merry, and sometimes, it must be admitted, slightly irascible, Major H. Shiner, D.S.O., M.C., Frank Wilkins, George Spragg and, like the wraith of Ortheris, the "Gen," handing out rissoles while he regaled everyone with low comedy ditties and war-time experiences (*circa* 1890 onwards). The Square, lying just off Holborn, was still Victorian and viewed the intrusion of bands of young men (Tubby and Pettifer kept open house in the best Poperinghe tradition) with considerable alarm—especially on "Guest-nights" when the whole neighbourhood was likely to resound with the singing of popular songs. What went on inside they could only conjecture, but the conduct of the extraordinary cleric who was constantly dashing in and out of the premises in the oddest clothes was highly suspicious.

Each of the occupants of No. 36 followed his particular avocation by day, but at night they all worked (very noisily) for the cause of T. H. Tubby would wade into mountains of letters—a task interspersed with innumerable cups of tea and his own inimitable stories—while the others tackled the thousand and one things he directed. All the world must know that Talbot House had been transplanted to London, but how could it know unless told by word of mouth, letters, telegrams, newspaper articles, and, as the tight-lipped residents of the Square could testify, even uproarious song? A golden age of hostelry would flower in the ancient capital, and men, finding fellowship and laughter in the new Talbot House as in the old, would go out and proclaim to eager hearts the gospel

of goodwill. Ah, what vistas of hope unfolded themselves before the imaginations of No. 36 in that spring of 1920, what an infinity of possibilities—but in the meantime, Tubby reminded them, it might be as well to gather together a few of the chaps who had known the old House and introduce them to others who might be interested in its future.

Every evening, therefore, in the absence of a door-bell, a piece of string was lowered from a window so that the luggage-label attached to it fluttered three feet from the footpath. On the label was written: "Rev. P. B. Clayton, once of Talbot House, Poperinghe and Ypres." Passers-by who had known the Old House, on reading this, would pull on the string whose upper extremity was attached to a bell in the flat. Thus warned, Tubby or Pettifer would rush downstairs to renew acquaintance with an old friend, and he, forthwith, was admitted to the heart of Toc H.

It was Tubby's own initiative that brought him to London at the end of 1919, afire with the spirit of Talbot House, the would-be architect of a spiritual movement that had not yet reached the blue-print stage. "Like many other men possessed by dreams," he once testified, "I took my plans, my projects, my absurdities, to many men; most of them turned them down. I became bitter, chilled and disappointed; and I was in this state when I determined somehow to see the busiest man in London." The man was his own cousin, Dick Sheppard. He had not known him as intimately as he had known some members of the Sheppard family but, nevertheless, they had met frequently before the war when Dick was the Head of Oxford House. During the war, like many other men, Tubby had crept into St. Martin's on short leave, and was so impressed by the atmosphere (Dick's infusion of life into a dead building was an example to the whole Church of what one ardent and tireless spirit could do) that he returned to the Upper Room of Talbot House and renamed it "The Chapel of St. Martin in the Field." It was to Dick Sheppard then that he went on a certain afternoon in 1919, wondering, when he knew of Talbot House and its immense ambitions, whether he would give a polite refusal as had the rest.

He was ushered into the study of St. Martin's Vicarage, and his cousin rose to meet him. He took Tubby's two hands, made him

sit down, and then broke in upon his opening sentence: "Tubby dear, before we start to talk, I want to tell you that I have prayed for you and for Talbot House day after day since I first heard of it. Come, let us pray together." And they did.

Seated again, he brushed aside his visitor's preface. "I know exactly what you want," he said. "You want a house in London, in the centre. Also you need a good round sum to start with. Of course you must have both. Now let us think. The simplest thing, if it were not for the lawyers, is that you should take over this large vicarage; it is much too big for us, and I must move. But then, Church lawyers—they'd object, of course. However, I will try and double-cross them. If they repudiate the whole idea, then we must get another house for you. Yes, and some money. How much will you need?"

"Of course," he rushed on, "I can't say how it will come in, but I am quite sure it will. The work is God's. No one can tell what happens in St. Martin's. A week or two ago a man came in and wanted me to raise £10,000 for some big scheme which had not got finance. He kept me from preparing my midday talk, so I just talked of him, and told the congregation what he needed. I warned them not to send me £5 notes, which would not do the thing he really wanted. The sum he needed was £10,000; if anyone had got it, why not give it? After the service, the same luncheon hour, a man from overseas entered the vestry and told me he would pay £10,000. We should be wrong to hope that this would happen at once for you; but please remember, Tubby, that everything does happen which God means; and I am quite sure He means Talbot House. When would you like to come and tell my people? Do please write something for the *Messenger*. Now, if you want me, let me come and help on your committee, till you have got things started. Then I step overboard. God bless you, Tubby."

It was an enchanting day for Tubby. He had come to St. Martin's dispirited, almost bitter, and he left that night, having been kept for tea and dinner, supremely conscious that he had found a friend hitherto unsuspected and that Talbot House, reborn in the heart of the Empire, would have an abiding habitation. He would come to London, and stay, come what may. And the result

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of his cousin's friendship was above all that he could ask or think. The first £10,000 which really founded Talbot House in London came through St. Martin's from two worshippers. Dick's spontaneous support, more than anything else, was responsible for the venture in Red Lion Square, and the high hopes of its Talbotousians that the future belonged to them.

Before leaving Knutsford to take up permanent residence in the capital Tubby had arranged for a meeting, preceded by a lunch, of close confederates at his club in Pall Mall, on Saturday afternoon, November 15, 1919. In the serio-comic style, at which he was adept, he convened the meeting, employing the kind of language familiar in the House's place of origin.

I. THE SUMMONS

OPERATION ORDER NO. I

Assembly Point: Central Church Fund Office,
40, Great Smith Street,
Map. Ref. S.W.1 Westminster.

Z Day Saturday, 15th November, 1919.

Zero Hour 15.00 (3 p.m.).

I. Information: The attack on the problem of reopening Talbot House will be carried out by a Round Table Conference thirty in number, troops being drawn from Talbotousians past, present and to come. The attack will be covered by a creeping barrage of business advisors, supported by expert Londoners. A section of Clerical Tanks will co-operate. The operations will be under the direction of Gen. R. S. May, C.M.G., D.S.O., etc.

- II. Intentions:
- (I) The Minutes of the first Meeting.
 - (II) Correspondence from the forward dump.
 - (III) Report on the second edition of the book.
 - (IV) Report on membership.
 - (V) Report on the House reconnaissance party.
 - (VI) Report on suggested liaison work.
 - (VII) Financial situation and prospects.
 - (VIII) Consideration of draft appeal.

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- III. Methods of Advance. When the blue line is reached and consolidated tea will be taken, before the supports pass through and capture the green line.
- IV. Nature of Country. The vital needs of maintaining the old fellowship and extending it to the younger clerks, civil servants and students of London offers special opportunity for the initiative of all arms, and risks must be boldly taken.

Tubby.
Chaplain.

Issued on November 8th
at the School, Knutsford.

Copies to all concerned.

Enclosed with the Summons were two documents. The first read:

TALBOT HOUSE

Lunch at Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, Saturday, 15th.
1.30 p.m. in the Members' Dining Room.

The following will be present:

General R. S. May, C.M.G., D.S.O.	Colonel Disney Roebuck Canon Partridge
Lord Saye and Sele	Rev. N. S. Talbot
Colonel A. Bates, D.S.O. (L.R.B.)	Rev. J. V. Macmillan
Colonel Ardagh, D.S.O.	Rev. H. R. L. Sheppard
Capt. H. Shiner, D.S.O., M.C.	C. Montague Ellis, Esq.
Major Pope, M.C.	G. Wiskeard, Esq.
Colonel H. Mynors Farmar, D.S.O.	L. Eggar, Esq.
	J. Manclark Hollis, Esq.
	K. Lyon, Esq.
	A. Smithers, Esq.

The second enclosure was headed, in Tubby's handwriting, "The Situation Report," and read:

To open a junior Cavendish Club of which the 4,000 Talbotousians in England would be foundation members at an annual subscription, say, of 10/6 for the 650 Londoners, and 5/- for country members. But auld lang syne is not our only, nor even our primary object. The real job would be to provide a good, cheap, sound centre for as

great a number from the junior civil service, bank clerk and territorial world as we could accommodate and absorb, attempting to infuse into them the traditional spirit of the old House, and to lighten the loneliness of lodgings. At the present moment the student world of London alone is larger than that of Oxford and Cambridge combined, overflowing though they both are, yet the absence of corporate life for the most part among students, both at London University and the big L.C.C. courses, is due, I understand, to the absence of such clubs as that we contemplate, at all events in central positions and in sufficient number. But it is manifestly true that neither the old Talbotousians, nor those of the next generation, can put up the capital to get the thing going, though I believe that, once going, we could make it pay. The biggest thing of the kind, as a pitch, in the market is the Guards' Club in Pall Mall, which I understand is likely to fetch thirty to forty thousand pounds. The problem in a nutshell, therefore, is, have we any hope of getting at least £50,000 to start with, or shall we be wiser under the circumstances to start in the smallest possible way, with the hope of subsequent expansion? This is the problem we put up to the family party on Saturday afternoon. I hope this is not presumption on my part, but I have every reason, thank God, to take your sympathy for granted.

He and J. H. Nicholson reached London a few hours before the meeting, their brains buzzing with schemes and ideas but not a tittle committed to paper. The idea of wasting the time of thirty or forty important men, however well-disposed, with generalities was out of the question, and it was clear to both of them that unless certain carefully defined proposals could be presented in the form of a memorandum the meeting would be a "flop," and the gallant conception of a renascent House still-born.

But what to do at twelve-thirty on a Saturday afternoon with London empty and the meeting almost on top of them?

Tubby, not unexpectedly, had an inspiration. They had emerged from the Club, and were passing down the street, when his eye caught the notice of an Insurance Corporation which, only a few weeks previously, had dutifully paid out the equivalent of ten years' premium on his smashed-up Clyno motor-cycle. They turned in beneath the sign and were about to tackle a supercilious office boy upon the possibility of typing a memorandum when the General Manager appeared and waved the boy aside.

He inquired the nature of their business, but before they had

time to reply they were conducted to his office, comfortably seated and handed cigars. William Hurst, for such was his name, had time to spare that Saturday afternoon and the conversation turned to fishing. Tubby and "Nick" sat on the edge of their chairs, the precious minutes ticking away as the allurements of Rye and sundry other places were amply discussed. They dare not hurry matters for they, too, said Tubby, in recording the incident, were fishing, playing a monster on a bent pin and a piece of cotton. The cigars went out and were relit, went out again and were relit, and still the salmon splashed in imaginary streams while the most important meeting in the lives of the two visitors advanced relentlessly.

Quite unexpectedly Hurst switched the conversation and asked them what they wanted. Tubby gulped, and took the plunge.

"We want some typing done," he said. "That's all."

"Typing . . ." he repeated slowly, as if he had missed the real import of the statement. "Did you say *typing*? Surely . . ."

"It's like this . . ." interjected Tubby, a little desperately, and in one long sentence he told him everything, not even pausing for breath.

"I see," mused Hurst. "It's an odd business, I must say, but I suppose I'm the only man hereabouts who can get any typing done on a Saturday afternoon. I don't think they've all gone."

He pressed a bell and the head stenographer appeared to whom the position was explained. They dictated furiously for half an hour and when the stenographer disappeared the General Manager, obviously interested, asked them to tell him more about their plans. He, in his turn, told of the manifold problems that came to his room day by day, of the needs of men and women as he saw them from his office window. When the fifty cyclostyled copies were in their hands they tried to thank him but he would have none of it. "Come again, gladly," was his parting remark, "when you want anything we can do."

This minor miracle would be incomplete if we failed to add that Tubby and his henchmen did return, frequently, to meet in the board-room until Toc H Headquarters moved into Queen Anne's Gate in 1926, and William Hurst became one of the most indefatigable officers of the new Movement.

These things, however, belonged to the future. The main issue on that Saturday afternoon was to decide whether Tubby and his supporters were justified in making this venture of faith and, if so, what methods would be most practicable. "Reggie" May was in the chair, most properly, because it was he who, as a Staff Officer in Flanders, had ordered the soldiers' club opening up in his area of jurisdiction to take the name of "Talbot House." But the naming of a new peace-time venture, it was found, presented difficulties that could not be resolved by the mere fiat of a staff officer. The name "Talbot House" was already being used by the Talbot House Settlement in Camberwell which had been founded by Bishop Talbot, the father of Neville and Gilbert, before the War and the establishment of another House by the same name would have been very confusing as well as illegal; it was decided, under the circumstances, to fall back upon the signaller's diminutive for Talbot House and adopt the official title of TOC H. "Its name," explained Tubby at a meeting of the Royal Empire Society in 1931, "is simply due to the old Army method of calling letters by symbolic syllables, which served to keep them quite distinct, when men's lives hung upon the accuracy of a telephone message. During the War, D was called Don, V was Vic, and T was Toc; with the result that troops, speaking in 'signalese,' instead of saying, 'Let us go down to Talbot House in Poperinghe,' said, 'Let's go down to Toc H in "Pop."'" It was a curious name for a new society—there were those who thought it too curious to be successful—but it quickly proved to have the dual advantage of being familiar to ex-servicemen and sufficiently provoking to strangers to warrant a thorough explanation. It was not the first time that curiosity had been the initial step of conversion.

The men who sat around the table at the Royal Automobile Club were level-headed and practical, but they were also men of faith, carrying within them the conviction that God works in mysterious ways and that Tubby, brilliant, humorous and devout, might well be his instrument in a new age. As a business proposition the scheme was dubious, but as a venture in faith it was bold and original in its attempt to transpose the spirit of brotherhood, born of the suffering of war, to the problems of a world at peace. They decided unanimously to go forward and appointed

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an Executive Committee to consider ways and means of launching an appeal for members and funds.

It was the token of support vouchsafed at this exploratory meeting of old friends that finally decided Tubby to cut all commitments and take the plunge. The mammoth task of organising a new Movement in a society whose ears were already dulled to brave music would demand all he had to give.

He was most fortunate, at a time of acute housing shortage, to find the flat in Red Lion Square, but the rent, £175 p.a., left him breathless. The burden was evened by three friends (Herbert Shiner, Frank Wilkins and the "Gen") sharing expenses on a sliding scale adapted to their means; but after a few weeks it became uncomfortably clear that even the pooled finances were unable to make the flat pay as a hostel. They agreed to advertise in the Agony Column for a fellow-hosteller, and their ranks were soon augmented by George Spragg, a Shakespearean actor! Five people in five rooms is perhaps a reasonable distribution from the point of view of the health authorities, but during the six months that Tubby & Co. occupied No. 36 it is no exaggeration to say that the nightly numbers were more nearly in the vicinity of sixty. All sorts of young men spilled over from one room to another, arguing, discussing, listening, some for whom war was only a name (the new recruits to Toc H), others who would never forget its actual horror. Cups of tea appeared and disappeared in a manner most miraculous, and through the haze of tobacco smoke Tubby could be seen working his way through piles of letters as he tossed off chuckling comments on the "queeriarities" of modern youth. It was the Old House, all over again, in a respectable London Square—the two, it must be admitted, did not mix easily.

It was clearly necessary (indeed, the restricted quarters at Red Lion Square made it imperative) to get an office from which Tubby and his helpers could operate. The day was saved by the generous offer of the Church of England newspaper *The Challenge* to set aside one of its three rooms at Effingham House in Arundel Street for the use of Toc H.

It might be as well to explain that *The Challenge*, first published May 1, 1914, was a paper designed to meet the needs of the average laymen; its theology was liberal, and its language

untechnical. A succession of gifted people—Miss Ethel Barton, Dr. Jane Walker, Miss Maude Royden (now Dr. Maude Royden-Shaw), Barclay Baron, William Temple and, for a time, Tubby Clayton—were concerned with its fortunes, but dwindling capital and an uninterested public sealed its doom in 1922. From the very beginning Tubby had been a contributor and, after the War, when his association became more intimate it was a valuable organ through which to express Toc H ideals.

Those were the days when the personality of William Temple filled the offices of *The Challenge*. He had resigned the editorship in the October of 1918 but, although he was furiously busy organising and touring the country for the Life and Liberty Movement, his interest in the paper was unabated and his voice in its councils paramount. After he had accepted the Canonry of Westminster, and was once more resident in the City, he came to the office almost every Monday and, together with Barclay Baron and Tubby who were invariably there, would lunch on buns and tea ministered by the heroic Miss Barton.

Discussions ranged far and wide—Religion, Science, Politics, Art, Commerce—spiced by the wit of Chesterton, and brilliantly summarised by Temple's encyclopaedic mind. Two of the three friends were old school-fellows, Temple from Colet Court and Chesterton from St. Paul's, who were instinctively sympathetic towards the new idea of Toc H, and saw its possibilities through prophetic eyes. Tubby, of course, found it hard to keep King Charles' Head out of *The Challenge*, which it invaded almost every week. But W. T. approved of the invasion, against doubts expressed by certain members of the board, and gave his unflagging support right from the start; one special number of *The Challenge* was by his wish devoted to Toc H, and was really the first attempt at a statement of any aims affecting the whole Church. That week Tubby wrote the editorial, and it was called "An Act of Constructive Penitence."

It was at this time that Temple gave Tubby a tip which he never forgot, and which proved invaluable. He said that when he resigned at St. James', Piccadilly, to devote at least a year to the Life and Liberty Movement, he found himself compelled, for obvious reasons, frequently to repeat a series of arguments and

illustrations—in other words, to make the same speech often. This, he then prophesied, would be Tubby's duty if God so blessed Toc H as he believed. What then was he to do to keep himself from going crazy through such repetition which was not vain, but fatally essential? He said that he had faced this problem, and that he had, to some extent, at least discovered a wholesome remedy. Each cause contained a single central theme, taking about ten minutes to express. The speaker must not vary this too much, since truth was one and indivisible. Next he could dress this truth in many garments, but must not make it complex or obscure; therefore the main contents must be the same. Here then was the tip. Never take up the parcel you are carrying—a wrapped-up dogma—by the same piece of string by which you carried it the previous day! Start anywhere you like upon the dogma, forwards or backwards, it will be the same; but it will give rest from repetition if you are always conscious that you must be thinking carefully what you are saying in order to omit nothing essential. Do not aspire to amplify your statement. Let it grow more direct as it proceeds; begin at a fresh point on each occasion; vary the length of time which you devote to this or that facet of the solid centre; and—SIT DOWN BEFORE THEY WISH YOU TO SIT DOWN!

When Toc H began to spread through the country and beyond there were weeks in which meeting followed meeting, and speech followed speech with such rapidity that he scarcely had time to collect his thoughts, much less devise new themes, and it was only the advice of his old friend that saved him from mental disaster. It was not the only occasion that he had to be thankful for his interest and support and in later years he wrote of Temple:

He saw its strength; he also knew its weakness. He flung himself with prodigality into the very heart of the whole Movement at Manchester and York and Canterbury. On no occasion was this great Churchman content to send a Blessing he could give. On two occasions while he was at York he summoned all the leaders of the Movement within the northern province to his garden, and there conducted on his own initiative two quiet Afternoons solely for them. The things he said

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remain in many minds, whence they have passed to others in the Movement: for Temple never spoke a sterile word. He preached for us on small and great occasions. He wrote at least one pamphlet for Toc H upon the inner life of every member; the teaching was so lucid and so plain, so utterly devoid of abstruse learning, that it might be ascribed by a reviewer to any humble teacher of the faith.

In the room given him by *The Challenge* at a nominal rental Tubby very soon became immersed in a sea of correspondence, and daily produced pamphlets and articles and notices whose humour and gusty enthusiasm were quick to catch attention. He seldom missed an opportunity to press his cause—each casual bystander, each passing acquaintance, taxi-drivers, bus-conductors, news-hawkers, all must be told of the astounding society that had come to burnish the drab soul of post-war London and set men's hearts alight. He was not over-particular about the niceties of clerical deportment—were not the apostles bidden to go out into the highways and byways and *compel* them to come in? If he waited to be invited by the fashionable pulpits and rural deaneries before proclaiming his message Toc H would share the fate of every other Movement that had been anaesthetised by respectability and eventually buried by an impressively-titled sub-committee.

He preferred other methods . . . pithy bulletins from the office in Arundel Street, the queerly assorted gatherings in Red Lion Square where views were exchanged and ideas explained, and his daily progress through the streets when, like an eccentric modern version of John the Baptist in a disreputable raincoat, he prepared the way for the new Movement of Toc H, dropping a word here, an invitation there, whisking grumbles into laughter, and gathering the oddest types into what usually became "a triumphal recruiting procession."

Looking at the world-wide solidarity of Toc H today it requires an effort of imagination to recall the meagre resources with which he embarked on the venture. The only things of which he had an abundance were faith and optimism—for the rest the assets made a poor showing. The bank pass-book stood at £19, and he owned a battered typewriter from which Sergeant McInnes had

coaxed wonders in the old Poperinghe days. His correspondence had now reached the stage where no one man could possibly cope with it and although E. G. White, and one or two new helpers, would drop in after 6 p.m. to arrange a workable index file, it was abundantly clear that unless he could get a typist the majority of the letters would remain unanswered. The situation was critical until, by one of those quirks of providence which have so often aided the growth of Toc H, Mrs. Payne, secretary to a London hospital, walked in and announced that she had a few hours to spare each day and would be only too pleased to do what she could to further the cause. But the expressions of joy gave way to anxiety and pained surprise when Mrs. Payne forthrightly refused to touch the No. 10 (an old machine reconditioned) which had been bought for £10 and a trade-in allowance on the Poperinghe relic. In desperation Tubby rang the salesman, through whom the purchase had been effected, and demanded his counsel.

The salesman, an ex-serviceman wounded at Ypres, limped into the office, sardonic and detached. He took the machine away and returned with a newer model for which he demanded £15. Tubby protested, declaring the price to be exorbitant and to his astonishment the salesman agreed, adding an enlightening comment on his employers, "Yes, they're dirty swine." P.B.C. became interested, and inquired the facts. He gave them, and reaffirmed his comment, "They're dirty swine all right. And I'm soon hoping to join another firm. What's all this about anyway?" Tubby explained and, after he had handed over the cheque which nearly finished him, the salesman, W. J. Musters by name, promised to come back after they had closed. That night he had supper at Red Lion Square.

It was some weeks before they saw him again. He came in one morning to tell them that he had left his job in favour of a new one at £9 a week but, in the meantime, he was going to have a brief holiday which he would like to spend in Effingham House giving them a hand. His girl was in Scotland nursing and, anyhow, the holiday was too short for them to get together. The next hours and days proved his efficiency, and the Toc H Headquarters in Arundel Street became a pattern office. The holiday completed, he bade them all farewell, and left behind a feeling of bewildered

helplessness. Office routine was not Tubby's strong point, as Leonard Browne had discovered in Poperinghe.

The star of Toc H was definitely in the ascendant. It was only a few weeks later when Musters reappeared and, after a momentary hesitation, said simply:

"I can't leave like this. You'll never get ahead; so I'll resign my job and come and work with you. What can you pay me?"

The bank balance at that moment was £36 and Tubby, forgetting that he too had to eat, promised £3 a week for twelve weeks; after that—? They agreed it was worth the risk, and W. J. Musters joined the staff as Registrar, thus beginning an association with Toc H which lasted for over twenty years. He died suddenly on January 14, 1941.

To one of Tubby's temperament, grandly oblivious to the pettifogging details of office routine, the unexpected advent of Mrs. Payne and "Mus" can hardly be estimated. Automatically it released him from the thousand and one minor responsibilities that are essential in planning an organisation yet nevertheless crippling to one of his imagination; he was free to expend himself in ways best suited to his unconventional genius although, let it be noted, the Central Executive was firm about the limits of his task. It had been decided to launch an Appeal in the spring of 1920—the future of the Movement depended on its success—and Tubby was to prepare the ground by contacts with influential people and his own original methods of correspondence and literary advertisement.

As a precaution the Committee sternly ordered him to buy a new suit on the logical assumption that important people do not, as a rule, care to have causes presented to them by tatterdemalions. Tubby's indifference to sartorial detail was notorious. There are still those who remember when he turned up to an important London dinner in tails, brown shoes, minus the collar and appropriate trousers. Disaster was averted by hurrying him off to a near-by shop where his dressing was properly completed. His more sensitive friends also recall with a shudder the occasion he went to dine with Lord and Lady Byng (whom he had not met) in a moth-eaten dinner jacket covered with his war-scarred trench coat; but he diverted the table by pretending to know nothing of

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Mr. Darwin when a fellow-guest inquired of him at intervals whether he believed in his theory.

The tailors did their best, at the cost of sixteen pounds, and Tubby looked respectable for six months. Even the best suits are not made to be worn twenty hours a day for seven days in the week.

Suitably panoplied Tubby got to work and very shortly the effects of his labours were to be seen in various places. In the early months of 1920 two different types of poster appeared in London's underground stations. The first stated briefly the aims and privileges of Toc H:

1. The perpetuation of the Active Service atmosphere of Fellowship.
2. The extension of this tradition to the younger generation.
3. The continuance of the House tradition in service, thought and conduct.

It then appended the privileges of which the two latter were, as yet, still only in the minds of the Executive. It was to their attainment that the Appeal was addressed:

1. The incalculable asset of live friendship.
2. First-rate club premises and hostel accommodation at cost prices.
3. A Corner House for all estates of men.

The other poster, ornamented with four pictures, was fuller in detail and required a few moments' perusal. It is usually held by the experts in such matters that the most effective posters are sparing in language and ideas, but Tubby maintained that if a man's interest had been caught by the first single poster he would be ready to learn more about the new Movement by reading the second and much fuller poster while waiting for a train. The results fully justified his instinct.

Tubby was too wise a campaigner to run the whole show himself, or, at least, to convey the impression that he was running it; the Appeal invoked Brotherhood as its guiding principle and a demonstration of its reality must be given at the very start.

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Herbert Shiner tells how he used to gather the hostellers together after supper and discuss details of the forthcoming campaign; he would read extracts from "the Appeal" and ask for suggestions, telling them that the public must know, in a few striking sentences, why they should subscribe to Toc H funds and support the new Movement. "Only those who have experienced the agonising effort to do this in conference," wrote Herbert Shiner, "can understand how stagnant the mind is on such occasions. In reality Tubby wanted about as much assistance from us as the moon needs from man to shed its light, but he accomplished one purpose—he made us feel that our thinking was of use to Toc H."

The real groundwork for the first general Appeal of Toc H was done through letters and newspaper articles. Tubby was most zealous in keeping the exact name and address of everyone whom he met and who showed the slightest interest in what he had to say, and the mailing list of the Toc H Headquarters in Effingham House grew tremendously with the advancing months. In the February of 1920 he sent out a circular letter to all members and well-wishers accompanied by two enclosures, the first an attempt to draw up the earliest rules for governing the Movement, the other touching the problem of accommodation which had to be solved if the Movement were to survive.

Those were exciting weeks before the Appeal. Everyone was working at a terrific pace and to hear the name Toc H crop up in clubs and bars and on the street was oddly exhilarating. They knew then they were working to some effect; people were reading the posters and bulletins, and there was no telling how many had heard about Tubby and his wonderful House from the hundreds of ex-servicemen who were scattered about London. They had set the sights high—£30,000 and a large increase of membership—but it was almost, if not quite, matched by their optimism. The actual results exceeded their wildest dreams. The Appeal brought not only a tremendous increase in membership but, even more important at this stage, several prominent people identified themselves with the new Movement. The Archbishop of Canterbury and Field Marshal Plumer became its Presidents and Private Pettifer, the Earl of Cavan and Countess Grosvenor its Vice-Presidents. As for the money, although the entire sum

was not raised, sufficient was forthcoming to justify a removal to larger quarters.

The flat at No. 36 Red Lion Square had served its purpose which had been to nurture the transplanted spirit of the Old House in London. Once, however, that spirit had begun to thrive it became clear that a small flat was hopelessly inadequate for its expanding needs; now for the first time since Tubby had arrived in London there were reasonable funds on hand and the Executive thought it time to launch out. Tubby, together with Reggie May, Herbert Shiner and Jack Peirs, interviewed Dame Guthrie-Reid, head of the Anglo-South American Committee, a war-time organisation which had occupied two houses in Kensington.

The upshot was that Toc H agreed to take over No. 8 Queen's Gate Place; the rent was high, the rates almost as high, but the deputation, flushed with the success of the Appeal, was dauntless. The size of the new hostel demanded competent stewards to run it, and Sam Pickles—who afterwards went on the stage—and his wife took over the whole show and there were no finer meals in London. The "Gen" hovered in the background—the final authority on all matters domestic and a liberal dispenser of Hoxton wit.

Things had begun to move with a vengeance. Ex-servicemen and younger men flocked to Queen's Gate; within a few weeks the situation had become impossible (even worse than Red Lion Square), and it was found necessary to take over the other and larger Anglo-South American house, No. 23 Queen's Gate Gardens. It was really an enormous place, although deceptively dwarfed by the towers of the near-by Natural History Museum, and well able, it was thought, to cope with the growth and ambitions of the young Movement. How little any of them, even Tubby, suspected the virility and future dimensions of Toc H; all of them, for those few months at least, were still thinking in terms of a localised club and thanking God, and the Anglo-South American Committee, for their good fortune. Money was not so plentiful that it could be wasted on removers, and so, under cover of night, bands of cheerful young men carried the furniture from No. 8 to No. 23.

The new hostel, which was a good deal larger than the Old

House, became the first full-sized embodiment of Toc H in London, and, in accordance with Army terminology to mark successive models, was duly christened Toc H Mark I. Herbert Shiner was elected the first Warden and presided over a House whose elements were every bit as varied as those in No. 16, Rue de l'Hôpital, except that civilian enterprises had taken the place of war and khaki was no longer to be seen. The furnishings of the Upper Room, including the Carpenter's Bench, which had served a purpose at Knutsford, were now brought to a little Chapel on the first floor of Mark I; here were held nightly family prayers and a weekly Celebration which enabled the hostellers, and all who regularly frequented Mark I, to receive spiritual encouragement of a kind it would have been difficult to find in ordinary "digs." Tubby was back in the innkeeping business minus the British Army.

All the same, there are advantages in being attached to an Army. There are always plenty of customers at hand and they usually have money or, if not, expenses can be charged against them. Mark I did not lack customers but, unfortunately, most of the customers lacked money. Times were not good. The first brave glow of peace had quickly faded leaving a world that was bleak and bewildered; soup queues were beginning to disfigure the cities, and "heroes," not finding the homes they were promised, tramped the streets in a fruitless search for work.

No. 23 was what is known as a "good address" and the rent was correspondingly impressive; it required something more than optimism to jump from £175 p.a. to £490 but Tubby, as always, was guided by his faith and not his fears. "Five of us settled in," he wrote, "on the lookout for lodgers. The lodgers of our dreams were hard to come by. They must be men magnetic and convertible, ready to 'muck right in,' as the British Expeditionary Force put it succinctly, and to build up a team of Toc H workers. They must pay what they could, accept the limitations imposed on us by empty linen cupboards, cracked china, kitchen chairs, few carpets, and a general atmosphere of life on active service principles." It was then that Siddy drifted in.

Tubby had not seen him since the incident of the Brielen cross-roads. His soldiering had ended abruptly in 1917 when, two

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miles behind the front line, a German light shell had smashed through a galvanised sheet and caught Sidy in a vertical position. He went down for the full count, badly wounded. But the early days of peace found him haunting his clubs and frequenting the Opera—at home and abroad. He was by way of being a virtuoso of music and painting, although the only sign he ever gave of such accomplishments (other than to his close friends) was his unblushing habit of humming the latest air to catch his fancy. This was an invariable obligato to walking and sometimes even a prelude to conversation; the mannerism was somehow gently consonant with his shy elegance. Humming, he came to call, dawdled his way through the afternoon, stayed the night, and next morning signed up as a hosteller. He was, it appeared, pretty well fed up with the aimlessness of his West End existence and the rough and ready atmosphere of Mark I, reminiscent of Flanders, excited his interest and his generosity. At first he slept alone, but later requested to share the room with a shell-shocked fellow who awoke each night yelling blue murder as he tried to grab an imaginary rifle to stop the oncoming Germans. Sidy slept in the bed beside him, spent each night calming him while the others slept peacefully in the House, and, at the end of the week, handed the awe-struck Warden five pounds—more than twice the amount of anyone else—for this accommodation.

On several occasions during the ensuing months he saved the situation with one of those odd cheques which, torn at random from a cheque book, he triumphantly produced from a forgotten pocket; whenever he disappeared, which was often, a weekly cheque arrived from his bankers, and then, perhaps, after weeks of silence a postcard bearing the stamp of a Polish or Tyrolean town. They knew then, as was his medieval habit, that "he was walking his Europe down in systematic solitude." When Mark II opened in 1921 Sidy elected to remain in Queen's Gate Gardens, but later transferred his allegiance to Mark III in South London, which part of the world, he meekly admitted, he knew much less thoroughly than Europe. "So he moved in and out," wrote Tubby, "attracted by an old friend at the Foreign Office, suborned to lunch in Chelsea or Mayfair; but more and more rarely as the years went on, accepting those events which made him miss the

evening in the Mark or in still poorer quarters. My Lady Poverty had singed his wings. He was henceforth her shy but devout lover."

Yet the success of Mark I, though qualified at first, brought its dangers. Night after night, and often during the day, the House in Queen's Gate Gardens was thronged with Foundation Members, men who had known and shared the unique atmosphere of the Old House, and there arose a very real temptation to confine the nascent Toc H to ex-servicemen, forming, as it were, a kind of martial hierarchy that was exclusive and dictatorial. Three years after Mark I had opened its doors the minutes of the London Committee still contained the ruling that none but an ex-serviceman could be appointed Warden of a London Mark. There was one historic night when Tubby and Barclay Baron pleaded passionately for a Quaker whom they had proposed for membership; he was an exceptional person, a man who had suffered greatly for his conscientious views, but the opposition to his application was so strong on the part of some that the point was argued heatedly into the small hours of the morning. The man later became chairman of a District team, and it is now a cause of wonder to think that his capacities were ever questioned.

It was clear to Tubby, and those nearest to him that if Toc H became simply a "reminiscent group" it was doomed to abject failure; it must appeal to youth, touch the hearts and wills of a younger generation, if it were to have meaning and influence in a fast changing world. His personal genius was readily recognised by all with whom he came into contact and his views on policy and organisation commanded respectful attention, but in matters such as this, which touched both sentiment and prejudice, some of the members were amazingly stubborn.

A further danger was symptomatic of the uneasiness of the times. The end of the war had snapped a universal tension, and the nations, catching their breath, swung into a whirl of pleasure that carried them giddily through the twenties. Syncopation was worship, and hedonism advanced as a serious philosophy by people whose undoubted ability could have been more wisely used in other directions. There was a threat, at the beginning, that the popular craze for "a good time" would invade Toc H and

gradually undermine the ideal of service and discipline inherited from the Old House. The war years had demanded a common "service" to achieve victory, and from the shared task had sprung real fellowship. It was argued by Tubby that Peace brought a still greater challenge, and therefore "service" took on a new and incalculable meaning. If men wished to live in a sane and improving world then each must recognise a responsibility to the other. Unemployment was increasing, prices zig-zagged wildly, and however loudly the jazz bands played they could not altogether smother the cries for food and work. Realising that Toc H could never isolate itself from the cares of men and live, the first simple steps in social service were taken by running an unemployment bureau which, because of a wide and varied circle of friends, did a surprisingly good job. This was really the beginning of what was later to grow into "jobmastery," a distinct feature of Toc H social work.

If the social consciousness of the young Movement needed encouragement it was close at hand. Tubby's entire life was dedicated to interests other than his own. He slept whenever and wherever convenience allowed, and for the other twenty hours of the day carried the burdens of two or three men. He usually worked in his shirt sleeves without a clerical collar although, when convention demanded—not often in his opinion—he would appear in a tattered Exeter blazer; but whether in Arundel Street or Mark I he was always surrounded with masses of papers which in no way subdued his cheerfulness or interfered with his chuckling asides on the virtues of all "the perfectly splendid fellows" who evidently made up this rather cock-eyed world and who, he hoped, would soon make up Toc H too. He was a slog-horse for work and the only signs of wear and tear he would ever show in those days was an occasional irritability. This tended to increase with the strain of the years but in the early twenties, when he was still under forty, his good humour and enormous zest for living was something to be wondered at, and a tonic for any who wandered into Mark I on a dull day.

His opportunities for the most essential needs of personal life, meditation and reading, became rarer with each passing week; the Movement, with that subtle propulsive power characteristic

of a true spiritual force, began to spread beyond London into the provinces, and demands for Tubby to speak from pulpits and platforms, to address private meetings and meet with individuals, some of whom were really influential, poured in from far and near. Those were the days when London saw him for a few fleeting moments at a time and conferences of policy were often conducted with a sandwich in one hand and a Bradshaw's Railway Guide in the other. Some idea of the extent of his travels is derived from the Annual Report of 1920 . . . "inaugural campaigns for the establishment of Houses and Branches had been conducted by the Chaplain at the following places: Edinburgh, Newcastle, Durham, Goole, Manchester, Stockport, Liverpool, Birkenhead, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, Portsmouth, Gosport, Maidstone, Brighton, Northampton, Swindon, Bristol, Cheltenham, Worcester, Oxford, Cambridge, Saffron Walden and High Wycombe." But those laconic lines convey nothing of the fantastic whirligig in which he was caught—the oft-repeated dash for trains at unearthly hours, writing letters, speeches, and sometimes sermons as he swayed through the night to a Northern destination, the hurried breakfast where chance would allow, the conferences, the interviews, the addresses, the yarns with fellows who had grasped The Vision to the small hours of the morning, and an occasional sleep when nature became too insistent.

Soon it became evident that Toc H was destined to be a national Movement requiring first-class leadership and expert planning. All through the country were men who, having known the Old House, were eager to add their enthusiasm and energy to the new Toc H. Some had already gathered friends and strangers around them but, apart from an occasional cheery meal and a bottle of beer, they were at a loss as to how to proceed. They needed guidance and in June 1920, Tubby wrote to a number of members he had carefully selected during his travels in the Provinces. "This is by the way of being a formal letter from Talbot House H.Q. to ask whether you can see your way to act in your own district as Local Secretary to the Movement. The step we are now taking in the formation of Local Branches all over the Kingdom is one that is vital to the welfare and development of the new work, and it is of the utmost importance that

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Toc H should be represented by a Foundation Member whose sense of service and fellowship can be relied on.

"The geographical analysis of our old Communicants' Roll (with the addition of a few old friends of the House) is now at length complete. It has been a big undertaking for an amateur staff, but the foundations are well and truly laid. The districts which we have formed are: (a) London and the big provincial centres; (b) country districts which have been more subdivided, in order that the Local Secretary may not find his small flock utterly beyond his reach." They responded with the cheerful loyalty that had made the Old House such a wonderful place back in the Salient. It was all very encouraging, but there was more to come. Pat Leonard was making a stir outside of London, and it was not surprising. He was the Chaplain at Cheltenham College and, in many ways, the pattern cleric for youth. He had returned from France with a D.S.O., and the credit for some startling adventures with the Flying Corps. This was enough to win respect from any youngster but when it was learned that he was a welter-weight boxer of some reputation and a first-class Rugger player respect turned to worship. Tough and lean his was the energy of the trained athlete and his sense of humour was only equalled by that of Tubby himself. But Pat won men not by his gifts, considerable though they were, but by a passion for goodness which he had the knack of translating into the colloquialisms of the ordinary fellow. He understood men and they understood him: Toc H could ask for nothing more. Here then was the promise of leadership, apart from Tubby, and a quality of leadership that might prove to be the prototype for other provincial leaders.

Tubby rushed down to Cheltenham and set hearts and minds afire with a brave picture of Toc H in an international setting—"In those days," wrote Pat Leonard, "it was difficult to distinguish between prophecy and fact when Tubby was speaking, so when we saw him into the London train, we were convinced that the spirit of Toc H was sweeping like a forest fire all over England and that unless we started at once Cheltenham's name would be forever mud." It might be as well to add, that, when the first Toc H Birthday Festival was held in London's Guildhall,

Cheltenham was amused and surprised to find that it was the senior of forty provincial branches.

It was from Cheltenham as a matter of fact that there first came the suggestion that later developed into the Ceremony of "Light," with its distinctive symbol of the Lamp. Lt.-Col. A. Murray Smith who was associated with Toc H in London was transferred to Cheltenham where he immediately got in touch with the local group under Pat Leonard. He was obviously impressed by what he saw and wrote a long letter to Tubby offering "some suggestions—for what they are worth": they were sufficiently valuable to be cyclostyled as a four-page leaflet and circulated beneath the title "Talbot House: Suggestions on its aims and Ideals." He had much to say about the approach of Toc H to social work and the need for the "personal touch" to replace the chilly detachment of official charitable organisations and, unquestionably, his observations greatly influenced the development of the organised social service of Toc H known as "jobmastery." In the course of the letter he asked that tribute be paid to those who had died in the war, so many of whom had known the Old House: "Might we remember, in silence for *half a minute*, at each of our gatherings, at supper or afterwards, our old friends whom we have left behind in the Salient or elsewhere." Men in all branches of the Movement, receiving this suggestion, instantly adopted it and the Ceremony of Light was born. The Lamp, now an integral part of every Toc H Ceremony of Light, was added a year later.

It was commonly recognised by the middle of 1920 that the spirit of Talbot House, Poperinghe, had, by the genius of one man, been translated into a national Movement carrying an individual message of its own. But Movements are not run like clubs and Tubby was quick to affirm that imagination must henceforth be used with catholic latitude. What was Toc H to be? What was its code of daily Christian conduct? In his concern he turned once more to Dick Sheppard, who never needed formal explanations. They met, with Alec Paterson, upon a weekday morning, and mutually agreed to draft four simple points which were to form a Rule of Life. A week later—it was a Sunday morning—they met again for Holy Communion and breakfast. Tubby delved into his pocket and drew forth a disreputable scrap

of pink paper, covered with copious notes and corrections, and read the following aims :

1. To promote an active and intelligent sense of brotherhood among men of all classes.
2. To stand for the fullest development of the individual for every man as may assure him security and opportunity within the growing framework of Society.
3. To rest content with no less a standard of education than will enable Everyman both to think and act with judgment and unselfishness, not only as a neighbour but as a citizen.
4. To recognise the dominating claims of the spiritual factor in human life and to found on them a principle of reconciliation between man and man in the joy of service for the common good.

To these four aims were added the methods by which they might be achieved :

1. The opening of a series of self-supporting Club Hostels, where both residents and visiting members stand four-square in the unity of common life.
2. The establishment of Central Club premises, which in addition to the ordinary recreation facilities shall serve as a depot for the diffusion of a wider outlook and for the recruitment and training of social workers.
3. To bring the expert to the Group, thus educating both ourselves and what public opinion we can influence.
4. To spread the Gospel without preaching it.

Dick, prevented by his own tremendous task from active participation, acted as the judge who was to decide which draft, or part of a draft, was the more acceptable. They then studied Alec Paterson's FOUR RULES OF LIFE :

Each day:

- (1) I will think for two minutes.
- (2) I will read for twenty minutes.

- (3) I will treat every fellow-servant as a brother, not asking from what school he came or how his father earned his daily bread.
- (4) I will build a new and glorious future for my country, believing that the best is yet to be.

The matter was discussed quietly, and not without a certain diffidence, because each was conscious of his own inadequacy to redact a Rule of Life to be imposed on all kinds of people. In the end the Four Points emerged, almost entirely from Tubby's manuscript. The Fourth Point contained a pinch of Christian salt supplied by Herbert Shiner. Talking to him before going to St. Martin's, Tubby had remarked that the Fourth Point should be "to spread the Gospel," and Shiner quickly added, from his memory of parades, "without preaching it." It was a joke that occasionally embarrassed Toc H in the early years, but it has almost passed into the English language. Thus, on a summer's morning in St. Martin's Vicarage the Four Points of the Toc H Compass were fashioned and their convenient summary—"to think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, to build bravely"—became a challenge to civilian conscience.

Toc H expressed the spirit of both Christ and the New Age when it insisted that all attitudes of superiority and distinctions of rank must be abandoned before entering the fellowship of its society; men must meet each other as men if humanity were to build a social order that could survive the appalling strains of the future. In this respect it differed markedly from the Cavendish Association which recognised the ideal of service to others, but approached it from the vantage point of privilege.

The Cavendish Club had been founded in 1911, during the week of King George V's Coronation, "to commemorate the solemn re-dedication of the throne to the nation and the nation to the throne in Christian union." It was a lofty sentiment, perhaps a little too lofty for this cynical generation, but the 1,700 public school men who met in the Queen's Hall determined to give it reality by pledging to devote "their leisure more closely to useful service under the inspiration of Christianity." It was typical of their code and admirable in its purpose, but the exclusiveness was

apparent in the name, derived from the Duke of Devonshire who financed it liberally, and the ruling that the applicant must have been to a Public School. The Club was housed in expensive premises in Piccadilly and by 1913 it was estimated that "400 have undertaken some form of service, in addition to the many who were already so engaged when they joined the Club." In the same year the directors of the Cavendish, among them some very distinguished men, resolved to extend their programme beyond the limits of Piccadilly. They formed the "Cavendish Association" and invited public school men and boys throughout the country to commit themselves to the ideal of service although they would be unable to enjoy the fellowship of the London Club. There was a fine tone about the Cavendish objects with their emphasis upon the "Christian spirit as the motive force and object of all such Service," but the Association suffered, as it was bound to suffer, from the narrowness of its class appeal.

The Association had been in existence nine months when the war came and the majority of its members were called to the Colours or diverted to some kind of war work. The Armistice brought men back to a world wholly different from the world in which the Cavendish had its origin. Most of the influential members of the Club and Association had been left on the battlefields and those who had returned were either too absorbed in other matters or too "broke" to maintain their membership. After some valiant efforts to revive the Club closed down and the Association carried on groggily in the face of eventual extinction.

Whether it was Tubby or Dick Sheppard who first suggested combining the Cavendish with Toc H is not clear but by the middle of 1920 the two of them with Alec Paterson were busily exploring the possibility. It was not easy to see eye to eye on all points but in the end union was effected and there is no gainsaying that Toc H profited enormously from this incorporation of the Cavendish into its life. The assets were solid and real—access to over sixty Public Schools, the addition of about 1,000 men of first-class calibre and an unrestricted appeal to *all* classes. On the foundations of the Cavendish there was gradually developed the "schools work" of Toc H which, as time went on, evolved more widely into "youth service."

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This, of course, was a spectacular achievement but the jubilation of Headquarters was tempered with concern. How on earth could the already overcrowded Mark I entertain and, at times, accommodate hundreds of new men? There was only one solution—find additional quarters. Tubby had made friends with the Westminster Estate which, among other things, offered 123 St. George's Square, Pimlico, for an extension of the work. He did not hesitate but moved with "Mus" and a few choice spirits to the new House overlooking the Thames; money was scarce—it usually was in the early days—but faith Tubby told them was an excellent substitute. And Mark II standing amid the grey poverty of Pimlico was the natural complement to its predecessor Mark I in respectable Kensington.

The house itself was not exciting, at first anyway. It lacked gas and electricity and the rooms had the vacant gloominess of a deserted building. It was a little disconcerting in those first weeks to walk into Mark II and find Tubby and Musters guiding the destinies of Toc H by means of candlelight, and the single table and wardrobe they shared in a dingy room behind the Chapel conveyed none of the comfort and sparkle of Mark I. In the corner of the room, hardly discernible in the half-light, was the Padre's bed and an Army kit-bag which, when the occasion merited, disgorged a crumpled evening suit; above the door was written the legend "THE POOR OLD PADRE." But in that room was distilled the essence of Toc H. It drifted into the corridors, wafted down the stairs, through the rooms and halls filling the whole place with cheerfulness and light and laughter. The old magic had done the trick, and before long Mark II was as crowded as No. 23 Queen's Gate Gardens. "H. Q." established itself on the ground floor where it remained until 1926. Need it be said that P.B.C. was once again defying every regulation of the civic authorities, whether for safety or health; "Mus" had migrated across the passage to a room labelled, not uncynically, "ORDERLY ROOM," leaving Tubby to hold court at the back of the chapel.

By May 1921 Mark III was opened at 148 York Road on the south side of the Thames (an achievement made possibly partly by an appeal in *Punch* and partly by the contributions of several

shareholders in Ingram Houses, Ltd.), and all sorts of people were turning up in the London Marks or writing from the Provinces. He briefly referred to that period and its personalities in a piece called "Personages Various":

In 1922 the London Marks were making friends with many sorts of people. Among their earliest captures were A. A. Milne, Sir Owen Seaman, G. K. Chesterton, and J. C. Squire for literature, Lord Robert Cecil, Aubrey Herbert, Bishop Gore, Sir Oliver Lodge, for various high-mindedness. Pure politics was not a neglected issue, thanks to Trevelyan Thomson in particular, who lived in Mark II while the House was sitting; and when he got in reasonably early, narrated to a pyjama-clad audience the features of the day. When will our statesmen realise the urgency of gathering new discipleship in the one way in which it can be gathered—by personal acquaintance such as this? Debates remain unread. During the coal strike Mark II tried a sound experiment. Pledged to think fairly, it proceeded to welcome three statements at successive Guest-nights. The first was from Lord Gainford, the second from Robert Smillie and the finale from Sir Richard Redmayne on "The Truth about Coal." Politics taught like this improves with telling. On July 4 I had the honour of escorting the Chief Scout on a midnight visit to Mark II. I took him to a room which then served as "The Nursery." In it three of our youngest members—all of them Scouts—were asleep. They woke and saw a vision.

Up to the autumn of '21 the only clerical member of the Toc H staff was Tubby himself. The staff was splendidly efficient and enthusiastic, but its main usefulness was limited to details of administration; it was obvious that if the Movement were to expand along the lines its Founder had envisaged it needed spiritual direction of a high order and this could only be supplied by qualified priests. Unfortunately Toc H was not in the position to command such services and it looked as if the growth of the Movement would have to be forcibly restricted. But on the eve of a finance meeting in September 1921, which threatened to be

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especially depressing, two anonymous gifts of £5,000 each were received for the endowment of two Memorial Chaplaincies (these came from St. Martin-in-the-Fields), and they were supplemented by a third in the following month. The results were immediate. Pat Leonard resigned his Cheltenham College Chaplaincy, and became Toc H Padre in Manchester. R. J. Goodwin, the Innkeeper of Little Talbot House, hurried home from Mesopotamia and raised the standard in Newcastle while Tubby recruited Hugh Sawbridge ("Sawbones") from the Knutsford staff and set him to building Toc H in Leicester. God had showed his hand and obstacles great and small were swept aside as the gallant little company advanced in its dedicated task. By the summer of 1922 there were over 5,000 members scattered throughout the kingdom and Cambridge alone boasted more than a hundred members.

It was a proud day for the Innkeeper of Talbot House, Poperinghe, when 700 members from all over England gathered in St. Martin's on a dull December afternoon in 1921 to take part in a "Family Service of Thanksgiving" for the progress already made. Tubby, recalling the "high thoughts and low diet" of Red Lion Square, could point proudly to 70 units of one kind or another, of which forty became organised Branches. The "Birthday Party" was held the same evening in Grosvenor House when fifteen hundred members, culled from every class, cheerfully chewed sausage rolls as guests of the Duke of Westminster and his mother, the Lady Grosvenor. The new Patron, the Prince of Wales, was absent in India but his place was taken by Prince Henry in a most jolly frame of mind. The opulence of the surroundings did not restrain the wit or the optimism which was distilled in a gorgeous ROUND ROBIN signed by every person present from Prince to most junior clerk:

*Address to be read at the Centenary family party of Toc H on the
fifteenth day of December, A. D. 2015:*

Whereas it is as unlikely that we shall be able to join your festivities as that you will join ours tonight, we indite this Round Robin to you. Not knowing you, we have the Utmost Confidence in you, and trust that our Sentiments are reciprocated

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on the same terms towards all those whose signatures are attached—with the inevitable exception of those whose names have plagued you in your History Books. But like all great causes, Toc H is similar to the “wood” in *Alice*, where names of persons are lost. To be serious in a document of this character would be unconvincing in the last degree. We therefore content ourselves with wishing you all Many Happy Returns of the Day and remaining your obedient ancestors in Toc H.

If that document were indeed read by those to whom it was addressed Tubby, I am sure, would be well satisfied.

CHAPTER IX

TUBBY'S practical knowledge of the New World was largely confined to a war-time acquaintance with Canadians, Australians, Americans, and New Zealanders, and the correspondence from friendships so formed. True enough, he had been born in Queensland, Australia, but from infancy he had been reared and educated in England and he was nearly forty years old before he actually visited America or the Dominions. Yet like many of his more thoughtful fellow-countrymen he believed that the dynamo of Anglo-Saxon greatness would have to be charged and recharged in part from across the seas.

It was with pleasurable surprise that he received an invitation from the Governor-General of Canada, Lord Byng, to visit the Dominion for two months and consolidate the random groupings of Toc H. It would have been astonishing if some of the Canadians, having known the Old House, had not attempted to apply its spirit of fellowship to the local conditions of their home towns, but a growth that could attract the attention of a Governor-General was gratifying. Barclay Baron, who had thrown in his lot with Toc H, immediately set to work and wrote for the visit a complete up-to-date account of the Movement in ten days, and within limits it was a masterly job. "Half the Battle," as it was called, gave Tubby, when speaking to overseas audiences, something on which to lay out his plans for the future, not to mention a chronicle of achievement that could be used to inspire struggling groups. He sailed from Liverpool on January 6, 1922, on a mission barely imagined in the old Poperinghe days, but he faced it with the same kind of cheerfulness as he had trudged down the shell-swept Elverdinge road on the way to Fantasio Farm.

The cheerfulness was temporarily eclipsed on reaching Canada. The Toc H units were there all right and surprisingly vigorous considering their isolation from the core of the Movement, but

he discovered that his visit was really the result of collusion among certain anxious friends who were determined that he should have a rest. He was indignant and would make no concessions to his friends' solicitude. Lord Byng did manage to persuade him to stay a fortnight at Government House but as soon as the time was up, to the hour, he collected his traps and set out to stump the Dominion. He later wrote regarding that visit:

When I reached Ottawa in January 1922, I soon found out the ruse which had been played on me. My august hosts had asked me for my health's sake. The object in my mind was a campaign. . . . After a fortnight's skating, I therefore started off from Ottawa as a free-lance lecturer. . . . My stock in trade was a lantern and some slides. I was to traverse the Dominion, finding what friends I could, what dollars were available. . . . It says a lot for the Canadian people that I was not deported out of hand. In the remoter spots, where the cinema was still a novelty, I billed my magic lantern apparatus as a new miracle, enabling a moving picture to stand still! Rotary rolled me forward, "Lions" leapt out at me, Kiwanis took me in and I returned the compliment. In all my wanderings I met no hand that was not out to help. . . .

This was true of the United States too, although it was one man, William Lusk, who first extended the helping hand. Lusk had originally come from the north of Ireland, a fact that few could have suspected; his cheerful garrulity was not in the least in keeping with the Gaelic tradition of reticence and his Anglican Orders must have outraged the consciences of his Presbyterian forebears. But in Ridgefield, Connecticut, where his rectorship lasted nearly forty years, they were indifferent to such things—they loved him for his unabated enthusiasm for causes great and small and his invitation to Tubby, whom he had not met but only heard of through an admiring cousin, did not surprise them. It was left for their visitor to do that.

He arrived burdened (as usual) with the most outlandish gear and a legion of porters, gathered from heaven knows where, trotting in attendance. His mood was not especially jolly at the

time and his quips and grunts appeared to have thoroughly flummoxed everyone around him, but when Lusk stepped forward he greeted him with a sudden flash of his customary good humour: "My dear fellow, how perfectly splendid of you to think of enduring a disreputable person like myself. I'm sure I can leave everything to you," and before the Rector of Ridgefield knew what had happened he found himself struggling with masses of luggage and the problem of tips. The parishioners were more nonplussed by the appearance of the Rev. P. B. Clayton than by what they assumed to be his eccentricities. But they had scant time to gape. The whole of Ridgefield, goaded by their strange guest, was soon organising itself for a mammoth meeting, and small boys were sent flying in all directions delivering the pamphlets Tubby had brought with him. The parish hall was packed and even if the audience did not quite understand the finer points of the strange British Movement called Toc H they enjoyed the personality of its Founder enormously.

It cannot be said though that Tubby altogether enjoyed his first visit to the United States. He was overtired after the Canadian tour and, in consequence, took a needlessly pessimistic view of the prospects of Toc H in a country where the whole of life seemed geared to subordinating the soul to the comforts of the body. In his jaundiced mood noise seemed to be the national substitute for thought and no one, apart from his Ridgefield friends, was disposed, according to Tubby, to listen to the babblings of an English clergyman with a bee in his bonnet. He was to learn in later years that his judgment was miscalculated and that, in actual fact, he had made a deep impression on some fine and friendly minds, and these people were to give generously in his hour of need.

There were times during that visit when he was annoyingly perverse. Lusk was at pains to arrange a meeting with a wealthy woman whose instincts could be very generous but whose ideas on life, and especially the deportment of the clergy, were unusually proper. Tubby was warned of her "peculiarities" and reminded that if he made the right impression a handsome cheque might be forthcoming. He turned up in a blazer and shabby flannels, confined himself to monosyllables between puffs on his pipe, and seemed far more interested in the antics of the dog than the

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intentions of his possible benefactress. The lady was not impressed and tartly informed the Rector of Ridgefield that she never wished to lay eyes on his "dreadful friend again." Lusk was terribly distressed and, after reasoning with Tubby, phoned profuse apologies. After much pleading on the part of Lusk, whom she did esteem, she consented, once more, to see "that terrible Mr. Clayton" at her home.

The second time he arrived he was more judiciously garbed, and while he paid his respects to the dog—dogs were an abiding passion—he appeared far more interested in the valuable bric-à-brac of the house and his hostess' views on life. They saw before them that afternoon the real Tubby—gay, witty, kindly and, occasionally, though not too often, impressively serious; he fascinated them with his experiences, informed them of the significance of his mission, and gently teased them with a twinkle in his eye. The lady was enchanted and he left that house with a friend whose loyalty never wavered through the years.

Yet the North American tour had taken a great deal out of him. It had been, in fact, just the reverse of the "rest cure" planned by his friends, and he later wrote:

On March 21 I sailed in the *Berengaria*, with no strength left in me, beyond a thankful heart, and 25,000 dollars paid or promised for Toc H anywhere. I spent the voyage in sick bay, sampling the sharpness of the doctor's lancets. My physique had given way; and as I look through the old diary, I wonder not at all. Thirty-one nights had been spent on trains, apart from 16 public lunches, 18 evening lectures, 4 universities, 18 schools and colleges, and 17 sermons; the foundations of Toc H Canada and U.S.A. groan at the memory of such shoddy workmanship.

While it is true that the overseas "holiday" of 1922 temporarily impaired his health it was productive of results that were to mean much in materialising the vision of a world-wide Toc H. A Dominion Executive had been formed, and a full-time organiser appointed: in the U.S.A. progress had been more temperate but he left behind strong friends. Further, he brought back an idea that was to give piquant strength to the Movement. Travel-

ling through Canada he noticed the efficient part played by women in public affairs, due to the support, in almost all cases, of a powerful Women's Auxiliary. He wrote a letter to the Central Executive regarding the position of women in relation to Toc H shortly after his return to England in which he remarked:

My strong conviction is that we should form a Women's Auxiliary of Toc H. There are, I believe, in England a very large number of unselfish women who would be glad to have within their reach such an avenue of service.

This was really the genesis of the Toc H League of Women Helpers which, under the leadership of Miss A.B.S. Macfie (one of the small band of Poperinghe nurses who was a Foundation member of Toc H) did such a priceless job in the early days visiting the London Houses of Toc H and doing all the necessary chores—darning, mending, inspecting and repairing the linen, arranging flowers, beautifying the various Chapels—that the hostellers either did clumsily or not at all. A year after Tubby's return from North America the L.W.H. had not only become an effective adjunct to Toc H, but had begun to develop its own character and, in the words of Barclay Baron, "to put a wider interpretation on their commission—the undertaking of social service of all kinds for women and girls which should run parallel to that of Toc H for men and boys." A ministry of intercession for Toc H matured steadily within the compass of its daily activities and by 1941 the "auxiliary" movement, founded in 1922, had grown to the extent that the Central Councils of both Toc H and L.W.H. unanimously agreed to confer a new name upon it—"Toc H (Women's Section)"; more recently still they have broadened this to "Toc H Women's Association."

Not one of the least surprising aspects of Tubby's genius through the years has been his habit of erupting ideas, casually and unexpectedly. Some of his most important schemes have been by-products of other activities. The League of Women Helpers was a most practical consequence of his first American visit but its formation and development were not permitted to interfere with his primary interests. The growing tree of Toc H might sprout many

lateral branches but it was the trunk that produced and sustained life, and it was the trunk that required, at all times, his main attention.

The original conception of a "Central Club" in London only had to be modified when it was revealed that the interior spiritual resources of Toc H were such that, merely by the process of natural growth, it would advance throughout the kingdom. Already in London Marks I, II and III were firmly established and by the end of 1923 Mark IV, Manchester, and Mark V, Southampton, were firmly in existence. The founding of Mark V, by the way, contained an element of romance not infrequently encountered in the expansion of Toc H.

When Tubby was in Canada a notice appeared in *The Times* which seemed almost too good to be true—"Gentleman living in South Coast resort wishes to give his house and grounds to some society which is a memorial of the War or for the benefit of ex-servicemen." Major D. S. Paterson, who was General Secretary at H.Q. at the time, confessed that he read the notice with pursed lips wondering what was the "gag" behind those disarmingly generous lines. He decided to take a shot in the dark and dispatched a letter at once to the advertised Box number. The weeks elapsed and the matter had slipped from his mind when, one morning, a letter arrived from Southampton. Tubby, just returned, was reached by phone at Beaulieu; he quickly went over to Southampton and within a few hours the spacious house, with six acres of lawn and wood, became the possession of Toc H.

It was not the only time that God's hand had indubitably revealed itself during those formative years, and such evidence, Tubby declared, was worth more than a dozen rest cures. All the same he was twice forced to rest at Beaulieu after his return from America. He simply could not learn to spare himself, or even nurse his outraged energies. He was wickedly indifferent to sleep, and worked like a piston rod every hour of the day: if he were not writing articles for various journals and papers, answering hundreds of letters, directing policies and details of administration, he was preaching at some notable public school, or leading a pilgrimage to Poperinghe and the Salient, or dashing up north to open a new branch.

If we ask what enabled him to endure the gruelling pace for

such periods of time the answer is psychical. He was sustained by the quality of emotional achievement. It was wondrously stimulating to observe the child of his soul growing to vital maturity, and when his strength was flagging some item of success, a report of progress of venture would revivify his whole being miraculously.

From the very beginning he had stoutly refused to consider Man in sections, like a vivisectionist observing each part through a microscope. Man was a totality, or he was nothing! In which case a Movement addressing itself to modern Man must embrace all his needs and interests—spiritual, intellectual, industrial, sporting, and this was precisely what Toc H was aiming to do. It was not without significance that the Movement, from its inception as a transplanted Fellowship, displayed an equally keen interest in such incommensurable activities as football and the theatre (it was fortunate to have in its Drama League in those first days such accomplished players, now on the professional stage, as John Gielgud and Edward Chapman); it did so in accordance with Tubby's carefully conceived plan that while the footballer may not be able to become a competent philosopher in the technical sense, yet the philosopher, if he is any good, should be able to appreciate the value of football within the rounded scheme of life. And so while Toc H football teams were scoring victories against such doughty teams as Westminster School, Bradfield College and Casuals "A" the Toc H Drama League was being acknowledged one of the enterprising amateur companies in the country. Nor was this all. The new "Schools' Department" had sponsored the first Swindon-Marlborough Camp at Marlborough College in the Summer Holidays; boys of the school shared the common life with their less fortunate counterparts from the industrial areas of Swindon and the experiment was pronouncedly successful. The Toc H spirit was indeed in action, touching, sometimes lightly, at others more firmly, each phase of the national life, percolating through every class and age.

Whatever strains the year 1922 imposed on Tubby, they were more than offset by the nature of its accomplishments. Barclay Baron called it "*Annus Mirabilis*"—"the Wonderful Year." It was probably the most crucial year in the history of Toc H. And if this statement seems exaggerated it is only necessary to

glance at the happenings of the year's last weeks. Peter Monie became the Honorary Administrator of the Movement, a Royal Charter of Incorporation was granted, and Tubby was appointed to the living of the ancient and beautiful All Hallows-By-the-Tower. These events decisively shaped the pattern of Toc H, and determined the manner of its development.

Peter Monie, for instance, possessed a shrewd Scottish mind flecked with a brilliance that impressed both Glasgow and Balliol and made an indelible mark in India. He had heard about Toc H from Tubby's brother, Sir Hugh Clayton, whose chief he was in the I.C.S., and the spiritual impudence of its Founder-Padre, as well as the splendour of its vision, caught his imagination to the extent that he resigned from the Service seven years before his time to devote his gifts to its progress. It was said that an hour after he had walked into the London Headquarters and taken his place behind Tubby's shabby desk Toc H was aware that a first-class administrative brain was at its centre. He it was who worked out in fine but elastic detail a pattern upon which all foreseeable growths of the Movement might be based, and manipulated the complications that arose, not unexpectedly, with the granting of the Charter.

The time was bound to come—the amazing thing is that it came so soon—when the Movement would cease to be “a one-man show.” It was obvious that if Toc H were to remain at unity in itself and, at the same time, exert full freedom of action it would have to be controlled by a proper Constitution. Towards the end of the summer Sir Charles Kenderdine and Montague Ellis drew up a Constitution, together with the necessary By-laws, and submitted it to the Executive Committee who, having approved it, petitioned for a Royal Charter of Incorporation. With the granting of the Charter—signed by King George V on December 14, 1922—the membership of Toc H became an Association and the Prince of Wales its Patron; its Objects were expressed succinctly:

1. To preserve among ex-servicemen and to implant and preserve in others and transmit to future generations the traditions of Christian fellowship and service manifested by all ranks of the British Army on Active Service during the War.

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2. To encourage amongst the members of the Association the desire to perform, and to facilitate the performance of, all kinds of social service as between and for the benefit of all ranks of society.
3. To promote among all people a wide human interest in the lives and needs of their fellows and to foster in every man a sense of responsibility for the well-being of his fellow-man.
4. To mitigate by habit of mind and word and deed the evils of class-consciousness and to endeavour to create a body of public opinion free of all social antagonisms.

Legal documents are more noted for the accuracy of their phraseology than their warmth and there were many who thought that the dynamic of Toc H had been obscured by the matter-of-fact language of the Royal Charter. What was needed was a glowing affirmation of faith. A conference of delegates was held in Grosvenor House on December 16 to discuss the matter and, after a variety of dialects and minds had expressed opinions, Peter Monie rapidly drafted the following "rider" which later became the MAIN RESOLUTION of TOC H:

Remembering with gratitude how God used the Old House to bring home to multitudes of men that behind the ebb and flow of things temporal stand the eternal realities, and to send them forth strengthened to fight at all costs for the setting up of His Kingdom upon Earth: we pledge ourselves to strive to listen now and always for the Voice of God; to know His Will revealed in Christ and to do it fearlessly, reckoning nothing of the world's opinion or its successes for ourselves or this our family; and toward this end, to think fairly, to love widely, to witness humbly, and to build bravely.

"The whole company," wrote Barclay Baron who was present, "rose to its feet in the dismantled grandeur of Grosvenor House (it was about to be demolished and replaced by a monster block of flats) and passed the Resolution standing, with a solemnity which is unforgettable to the handful of present-day members who were

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there." It was afterwards confirmed by a Council meeting and, in 1925, incorporated in the statute book.

The year was destined to end on a high note. Tubby was appointed to the ancient and coveted living of All Hallows-By-the-Tower and, on the day of his induction as Vicar by the Bishop of London, the first Birthday Festival of Toc H was held with its Patron, the Prince of Wales, presiding. It was a long way from the days of enterprising penury in Red Lion Square. Toc H was now a Chartered Movement with a Guild Church of its own. The future looked promising.

CHAPTER X

TUBBY incautiously claims that the buried piece of London Wall on Tower Hill is "the finest stretch of Roman Wall in Northern Europe" and Tower Hill itself is the "pivot of British life and aspiration since Julius Caesar." There are those whose local pride rebuts such claims but they readily grant that the drama of the Hill is pretty impressive. The Druids sacrificed there when Roman legionaries were still planting outposts on the far-off grey Euphrates and, in a later generation, soldiers from the turrets of the Roman Castra commanding the approach by water to Londinium must have watched the wild hordes of Boadicea assemble for their assault on the capital. Six hundred years later Ethelburga built "Berkyngechirche," on the western edge of Tower Hill, using stones from the ruined Roman buildings, and legend had it that the "Lion Heart" of Richard I of England was buried in a casket in All Hallows. There is, moreover, a curious allusion in Dante to the heart of the king by the bank of the Thames, which has long been connected with the legend.

Five centuries later the sad remains of Archbishop Laud, beheaded on Tower Hill—who had used All Hallows to demonstrate his theory that "habits of outward reverence would lead insensibly to inward reverence of soul"—were given a temporary resting-place in the Vicar's vault, whence they were moved after the Restoration to St. John's College, Oxford. Here, too, lived Captain William Penn, the father of the founder of the State of Pennsylvania. Pepys who enjoyed his friendship was living with his wife in cheap rooms rented within a courtyard abutting on the inside of the Roman Wall, and William Penn was born close by within the ancient wall of London city. Clearly then, it was no coincidence that a hundred years later brought John Quincy Adams, Ambassador of the United States at the

Court of St. James, to the altar of All Hallows with his English bride.

It was a sagacious choice that made Tubby the Vicar of All Hallows. His whole soul was instinct with the spirit of history and each stone of the venerable edifice had for him its revealing message. He loved All Hallows, passionately, enduringly, as a man might love a beautiful woman—indeed this was the analogy that occurred most readily to him.

His appointment to All Hallows was in keeping with an old tradition of the London Diocese. Nowadays there are probably three million people in the City during the hours 9-5, and little more than 4,500 at night and during the week-ends. The city churches, over forty of them, were consequently left quiescent, their spires rising above streets as vacant as the skies. Many of these livings were heavily endowed and as the pastoral duties made only limited claims on the time and energies of the incumbents the custom gradually developed of appointing men who were doing work of national significance, thereby conferring a stability of office which in no way restricted the scope of their extra-parochial labours.

Dr. Randall Davidson, then Archbishop of Canterbury, was reminded of this on a summer's afternoon in 1922 when he arrived in East London to open the new premises of the Port of London Authority, which stands across the street from All Hallows on Tower Hill. Emerging from Mark Lane Underground Station, which faces the church, he crossed the road and tried the door. It was locked. There was no answer to his persistent knocking, for sometimes city vergers lunch late and the place looked disused. As the Patron of the living he was well aware, of course, that All Hallows was without a Vicar. He turned away and proceeded to the public duty that had brought him to those parts. That done, he returned to the church and the verger appeared. Inside the Archbishop knelt and prayed.

He was taken ill next day and confined to his bed but the name that had come to him while he prayed in All Hallows persisted in his mind. He sent for Tubby and asked him to accept the post as Vicar, and from this vantage point in the City to keep a finger on the pulse of commerce; he had anticipated any objections

from the young priest by suggesting that All Hallows should become the Guild Church of the Toc H movement. It was an inspired conception which the years and experience have effectively realised; it would now be difficult indeed to conceive of Toc H without that central sanctuary.

The day of the induction was a stirring witness to the virility of Toc H, scarce three years old on English soil, and a presage of the harmony that was to grow between an ancient parish church and a youthful world Movement. The Bishop of London, of course, was performing a familiar and customary act of induction but he was, on this occasion, significantly supported by Neville Talbot, co-Founder of Talbot House in Poperinghe, and his father, the saintly Bishop of Winchester. In the congregation, among other notables, were the Burgomasters of Poperinghe and Ypres, chief citizens of the places that had witnessed the birth of Toc H, and hundreds of others, young and old, from all parts of the land. The "Family Thanksgiving," lasting half an hour, followed the Service of Induction, and it had just started when the Prince of Wales slipped quietly into his seat.

That night the first Birthday Festival was held in the Guildhall and Tubby stood on the platform beside the Prince looking down upon a great throng of over two thousand people. Also on the platform were the Lord Mayor of London, the Burgomasters of Poperinghe and Ypres, Lord Salisbury, a Trustee under the Charter, Alexander Paterson, his old Oxford friend and Chairman of the Central Executive, Peter Monie, the Hon. Administrator, and, of course, Neville Talbot and his father. What a contrast to the few cronies gathered three years previously in the smoke-filled rooms of Red Lion Square.

The Lamp—a simple and beautiful bronze replica of the Roman lamp used by the persecuted Christians in the catacombs—which Tubby and "Barkis" (Barclay Baron), in a moment of combined inspiration in a Bristol solicitor's dreary waiting-room, had decided would henceforth be the "badge" of Toc H, was to be used for the first time that night. Marching columns filed on to the platform, three delegates from each of the forty Branches whose status was to be proclaimed with ceremony, and on the floor facing the platform were the representatives of nineteen great

English schools, each of whom was to receive a Lamp. There was something tremendously impressive about the whole thing, as there always is when pomp is replaced by the quiet authority of sincerity. The opening words of the Prince of Wales were very much to the point: "Tonight marks a great step in the early life of a great society, a society which will, we hope, remain young when the youngest of us here grows old. . . . I share with hundreds here, and thousands more whom you represent, an affectionate remembrance of the Old House in 'Pop' . . . and I am sure that all of you at least hope that Toc H today may go forward in its tremendous task of conquering hate and teaching brotherly love between fellows of every class."

The ceremony of the lighting of the Lamp, from then on the central feature of any Toc H gathering, was initiated for the first time that night. The "Prince's Lamp," a gift from the Prince "in memory of his friends" and the parent of all others, was handed to H.R.H. by Tubby's old batman "The Gen." From its flame the Lamps of branches all over the world were to be lighted and, between Festivals, it was to stand, perpetually burning, in All Hallows. The impression of the rite, in all its simple dignity, is best conveyed by Barclay Baron, an eye witness: "And then the delegates of the Branches advanced, from left and right together, halting at positions marked on the red carpet, the Lamp bearer knelt, the other two stood, while the Prince with a taper touched the wick of their Lamp into flame; then they moved slowly back into their ranks, giving place to the next party. . . . The climax of the ceremony was now coming. The Lamps were lighted for the first time, a constellation of little golden flames. The lights in the chandeliers of Guildhall suddenly died out and into the dim space and great silence the words of the 'Ceremony of Light' went out for the first time. That night a sentence, unrehearsed and unexpected, was added. From old Bishop Talbot, whose youngest son, fallen before Ypres, had given this Movement its name, came a ringing voice: *Dona eis, Domine, requiem aeternam, et lux perpetua luceat eis*—'Give them eternal rest, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.' Then the darkness of Guildhall was filled with bugles, sounding first the long, moving cry of 'Last Post' and, when that had died on its lingering high note, the stirring summons

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of 'Reveille.' REMEMBER and MAINTAIN! Lamps and bugle calls had caught up in a few minutes of sight and sound, beyond the reach and need of words, the whole meaning of Toc H."

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During the early months after the appointment to All Hallows Tubby continued to live mainly at Queen's Gate Gardens, his daily trip to the City being interspersed with quick visits to the various provincial branches of Toc H. But although All Hallows had been designated the Guild Church of the new Movement it also, it must be remembered, had an historic mission to the City of which the Vicar was not unmindful. An urgent task, he found, was to strengthen the foundations of the old church to resist the incessant throb of the adjacent trains and the earth-shaking tide of the daily traffic. But it was not until 1929 that a raft of reinforced concrete was slowly inserted under the church, without interference with the worship of the City workers who, over the years, were increasingly slipping in for rest and prayer. As time went on four hundred a day was not unusual, many coming to the early morning Communion as joyful guests before proceeding to their offices.

One of the stated aims of Toc H in the original Appeal was to extend a friendly, helping hand to the "younger brothers" of the fellows who had been left behind in Flanders. "Give them a home and a friend," it had run, "right on the spot where their working lives are spent." Well, the Movement was doing much with its Marks and the unique fellowship associated with them, but Tubby was determined that All Hallows too should play its part in the daily working lives of the young men and women who crowded the City's offices and thoroughfares during the week. A desperate need, at the time, was for a decent place to eat. Workers, unable to afford the prices asked by the restaurants, brought their lunches from home and these were eaten, most frequently, on street corners or, if the weather happened to be bad, huddled in doorways. Here then was human need and Tubby thought it not irreverent to throw open the doors of his church to meet that need. He announced his intention in a letter to *The Times* which instantly produced a spate of indignant correspondence from his

elderly and less imaginative confreres in the City. In no way deterred the "Lunch Club" was started and, until suitable quarters were found a fortnight later, lunches were actually eaten in the nave of the church and choir vestry. He believed, not without cause, that our Lord who had had compassion on the multitudes would look more leniently on the midday paper bags in All Hallows than on the directors and secretaries feeding in luxury at Sweetings. One fact is indisputable—large numbers of workers found their way into a building that had become strange to them. In many cases the introduction was followed up, for, as had been the case at Poperinghe, those who came merely in search of bodily convenience presently discovered in themselves both spiritual needs and the means of their satisfaction.

At the same time as he opened the "Lunch Club" he erected a Christian "soap-box" on Great Tower Hill. For years the Hill had rivalled its famous counterpart Hyde Park as a public sounding board of cranks and atheists with no Christian counter voice. Now, under the aegis of the Guild Church, another platform was raised from which at lunch-time Tubby and his "aides"—usually young men from Oxford or Cambridge reading for Orders—proclaimed to the crowds that the Incarnation still had meaning in the twentieth century. London was having its religion served up with primitive spice and finding it palatable.

Meanwhile life at Queen's Gate Gardens was simply an extension of Red Lion Square. Exciting, unorthodox, yet immensely vital. Visitors sometimes got the impression that they were being entertained in an air-conditioned Vesuvius. You were as likely to meet a Governor-elect of a Dominion as a gold prospector from Alaska, and your host, after you had been kicking your heels for an hour or two, would probably come dashing in with a most noble lord on one arm and a happy, though slightly bewildered, taxi-driver on the other. Practical jokes and profound discussions were a familiar combination, and after prayers each night there was no knowing what outlandish scheme would enter the Padre's head and, not infrequently, guests and members found themselves on the other side of London engaged in a preposterous prank.

An impression of the Vicar of All Hallows and No. 23 in that

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first year is given by Noel Gillespie who was then at New College reading medicine. Noel must have been about eighteen or nineteen at the time, a slight, sensitive youth whose shyness concealed both a capacity for affection and a fine critical intelligence. He later worked, while still an undergraduate, with Albert Schweitzer in French Equatorial Africa and to this day insists that two of the greatest men living are the Alsatian and Tubby Clayton. In any case, he came to Queen's Gate Gardens in the summer of '23 on the recommendation of a friend who knew that he was going to be at a loose end in London for a couple of weeks.

Beyond the fact that he had been the Founder of Toc H he was not quite clear who Tubby was, but he went to Mark I and was conducted upstairs to a large L-shaped room, pleasantly furnished with sofas on one of which reclined a small rotund man, puffing a pipe, and wearing a dilapidated Exeter College blazer over a shirt unfastened at the neck with no collar on. The large, impressive face, with eyes twinkling merrily behind tortoise-shell glasses, attracted him at once; this, he felt, was a man who "understood." As soon as Tubby caught sight of him he called out:

"Well done, old man, splendid. Come and tell me how Oxford is getting on." He followed this greeting with a prolonged chuckle.

There was no formality of any sort, and one felt that one was friends with these people without a lot of irritating preliminaries. Tubby seemed to have an amazing vision of youth banded together in a Christian society, with Oxford playing a leading part in the movement. Noel was impressed by his enthusiasm, and a little overwhelmed by Tubby's immediate assumption that he was posted about the whole thing, and a colleague in it. At about 2.15 a.m. he was conducted to a front room above the lounge, marked in large letters "The Three Brothers Room," and shown, in the darkness, one empty bed in a room full of sleeping forms. Tubby then left him with a "Good night, old man," which rang with a sincerity that he had never before attached to that commonplace remark.

At breakfast he had several surprises. Everyone present, although they fetched their own food and took their own plates away,

insisted on waiting upon him. His host of the previous night shortly appeared wearing an ancient pair of grey flannels and, to his astonishment, a clerical collar. Over breakfast Tubby remarked that the two of them might go up to the City and see All Hallows, a suggestion that did not inspire Gillespie with confidence because, at the time, he was indifferent to the Church and its clergy. But the voice was so friendly and compelling that, in spite of himself, he acceded.

They went round to the mews at the back of the house and climbed into an elderly Talbot car which, after a good deal of persuasion, started with a violent jerk. The next half hour was a gruelling experience. Tubby's idea of driving was to press his foot hard on the accelerator and go hell-for-leather through everything while he talked unceasingly on every subject under the sun. Gillespie swears that it was his prayers alone that brought them to All Hallows.

Above the small door at the north-west corner of the church was a large "Porchroom" reached by a narrow flight of stairs. Here were found two men to whom he was introduced. One was short and powerful looking, very bronzed, with the eyes of a Franz Hals portrait, and wearing shorts and a Queen's blazer which looked as though the rats had gnawed it. This was George Moore, Tubby's future curate, just down from Oxford and late of the Royal Engineers: he had once been Assistant Camp Chief at Gillwell Park and Baden Powell had declared him the best Scout in England. The other man was Arthur Fyffe, Tubby's secretary, and he looked hot and overworked. Both men radiated friendliness and greeted him warmly.

Tubby then took him into the church and together they explored its beauties soon to be further enriched by the genius of Alec Smithers . . . the Grinling Gibbons font and pulpit, superb examples of the richly decorative woodwork of the Wren period, the Penn tablet, and the Altar standing as Laud had left it. When they got back to the Porchroom Tubby suddenly turned to him with a smile:

"You know, old thing, we don't go in much for surnames here. So you shall be called Jock for 'unless a man be born again . . .' you know——"

The name stuck but it was not till long afterwards that Jock Gillespie discovered why he had hit upon that particular sobriquet. One of the more obscure poems of Rudyard Kipling was entitled "The Life and Death of Jock Gillespie." But the tone in which the remark was made was by no means jesting. He was, he admits, in great need of being born again and Tubby's action, so apt psychologically, was symbolical of the beginning of the process.

The next two weeks left him in no doubt as to the nature of Toc H or the extent of its growing enterprises. He was dispatched on the most exacting missions without any question as to his capabilities; it was assumed by P.B.C. that an honest, reasonably intelligent fellow would naturally discharge whatever responsibility was assigned to him. Big men, he always declared, were never big men until responsibility made them such. And Jock, like so many others touched by Tubby's hand, began to feel that he might have powers hitherto unsuspected. It was exhilarating discovering yourself at the same time as you were discovering other people. And his discoveries of others were edifying, for example the enormous jocularity of G. K. Chesterton who, in the crowded lounge of Mark I, spoke about religion with the enthusiasm of a schoolboy discussing football.

It was a new world to the youngster from Oxford, gay, natural and bright as a shilling. Enthusiasm or, in the language of the Movement "gallant, high-hearted happiness," was one of the first things to be learned. It was not difficult, Gillespie discovered, because everyone around you was bursting with it, and never more cheerfully and noisily than at the annual Birthday Festival. His introduction to this unique rite (it was the second Festival) could not fail to impress. In the first place Tubby had very ingeniously modelled the service for the occasion on John Bunyan, the various padres taking their allotted parts, and the haunting verses of his first Birthday hymn, "Come Kindred Upstand," were sung. Afterwards in the Guildhall, where the people were almost sitting on top of each other, the Prince of Wales lit the Lamp in the Ceremony of Light and the Duke of Devonshire read the lessons. Then came the singing of "Rogerum," the sensation of the evening. Tubby had suborned the band of the Coldstream Guards to play for the Festival, and the tune of "Rogerum" had been written

out for them by George Moore who had laboured many days over it. Like all manuscripts they found it difficult to read and started very slowly and cannily on the first verse. Tubby, singing the verses in an immense voice as he beat time before the crowd, found that his breath could not hold out at that speed, and so accelerated and reached the end of the verse long before the band had reached the end of the third line. The result was devastating and, in the middle of the roars of laughter, Tubby bellowed: "It's the old story. The singers go before, the minstrels follow after."

Towards the end of the year Tubby moved into the Porchroom at All Hallows, the large incommodious room in the north-west corner of the church which he shared with George Moore. Few people in London could have lived more primitively, and none more cheerfully. There were no recognised hours of labour or rest and "bobbies" on the local beat would frequently see the light burning as late as four o'clock in the morning. This led to an amusing incident one night, recounted with great gusto by Moore.

He and Tubby were sitting before the fire and sipping their cocoa in the small hours of a bitter November morning. Tubby, glancing out of the window, saw a half-frozen policeman on his beat beneath Robert Dyas' doorway; without a moment's hesitation he went downstairs, walked over to the constable and said:

"My dear old man, it's a horribly cold night. Do come up and have a spot of cocoa with us."

The man hesitated for a moment between duty and desire, but only for a moment, and soon he was seated before the rekindled fire, between Tubby and George, chatting away about his share on the Salient and the disadvantages of his calling. Time slipped by, and presently there came a loud, imperative knocking at the outer door. Tubby went down and opened it and found the Inspector who apologised for the lateness of the hour and explained that he was looking for one of his men. Had Mr. Clayton seen him by any chance? Tubby asked him to wait a moment, closed the door and, rushing upstairs, shouted in a hoarse whisper:

"George, the Inspector's downstairs. Get this man out by the south door, quick."

The two set off together and as soon as he thought they were

out of the way he returned to the Inspector with the suggestion that, being very cold, he might like a cup of cocoa before pursuing his search. The Inspector declined. He was about to go when they both happened to look down to the lower end of Seething Lane and around the south-west corner of the church were projected two heads, horizontally superimposed—George's above and the policeman's below. At the sight of them the Inspector shouted at the top of his voice, "Wait till I get you," and started off in hot pursuit, followed by the protesting and breathless Tubby. The chase went several times round the church before the Inspector caught his man and led him off in disgrace.

There was a serious row over the incident; the man almost losing his job and Tubby getting some "straight talk" from the authorities. Yet it was this very indifference to time and circumstance that gave his love for men such an original flavour. One of the devoted sons of Talbot House in Flanders was George Coltman, a private in the Canadian Army. Dreadfully shot up in the Somme battle, he lay for years in plaster in Lewisham Hospital, where he was constantly visited by Toc H friends. When he was plainly near his end he talked to Tubby one evening of the Prince of Wales whom he had seen with admiration on active service. Tubby sat up working all that night but his thoughts constantly returned to the dying George and at daybreak he took action. Driving in a taxi to St. James's Palace he passed the sentry on the plea that he was on an errand of life and death and asked for the Prince's secretary. The upshot was that the Prince himself was roused and came down in his dressing-gown, prepared to answer Tubby's request that he should visit a dying fellow-member. But alas! an overcrowded day in his diary forbade this and he had to be content with sending George a selected photograph of himself with a personal message written on the back. It reached the dying man when he could no longer hold it in his hands but he smiled and understood.

Of course, the demands of a city parish were heavy but they could never be allowed to detract from P.B.C.'s obligations and duties to the Movement. All Hallows *was* the Guild Church of Toc H and each derived a special effectiveness from the other. The Toc H and All Hallows Trust Deed of 1927 clearly defined the

relationship and, by inference, affirmed the right of the incumbent to regard Toc H and its global activities as the primary part of his work. And Tubby's manipulation of his respective duties, within and far beyond Tower Hill, was a constant wonderment to those who had the chance to observe. It was done by a series of whirlwind rushes hurriedly improvised on P.B.C.'s own particular and rather weird concept of time: "The only way to arrive in time is to start out late." A hundred disillusioned aides can prove him wrong but Tubby, the most unpunctual man in the world, maintains his principle is right; it is the unexpected happenings that nullify it. It is one of the occasions when one is not quite sure whether he is being wickedly humorous or merely naïve.

The visit to Mark X, Hull, at the beginning of 1924, may be cited as fairly typical of the tours and visits he made throughout the kingdom at that time. After a long and busy day in the City he wrote letters until 3 a.m. He then collected his aide—Jock Gillespie in this instance—and went to the Cœur de Lion Chapel of All Hallows where, kneeling in the light of the Lamp, he asked a blessing on the venture—a rite invariably performed before all journeys. They stepped from the church into the bitter cold of the early morning, Tubby wearing an army trench coat, incredibly stained, with a huge college scarf and a round fur bonnet which made him look like a Moscovite! Jock, for his part, sported riding breeches, an army coat, and a cricket cap.

Tubby was in his gayest mood. Leaving the proprietor of the near-by coffee stall and his patrons convulsed with laughter they nosed their way through the traffic on the Great North Road while Tubby, with wicked chuckles, talked the most extravagant nonsense. Once outside of the town his mood changed. Down went his foot on the accelerator and away they raced through the darkness. They stopped for breakfast and an occasional old church which the Vicar's antiquarian eye absolutely refused to neglect. At Grantham they were alarmed to learn that Hull was still 115 miles away—and they had barely three hours to do it in!

The next hours were terrifying . . . Jock drove for the first hour over rough roads with Tubby urging him to go faster, faster. Tubby then took the wheel and tyres and engine became red hot. There was one straight piece of road with several domed

bridges along which they zoomed at a terrific speed. At the first bridge the car leapt into the air and almost hurled the baggage out. Jock, thoroughly shaken, scrambled to the back of the car to save the luggage. Tubby, oblivious to all except time, raced on towards the other bridges without the slightest slackening of speed. At each bridge the car leapt mightily, like a mechanical kangaroo, and fled on with Jock clinging desperately to the baggage and muttering unceasing prayer.

They arrived on time—a phenomenon that the begrimed P.B.C. received with perfect equanimity as he climbed from the steaming car and strode into Mark X. The room was packed and, throwing his hat over the heads of his audience, he proceeded to give a rattling speech, admirably summarising the ideals of Toc H and injecting tremendous enthusiasm into his listeners. Next morning a number of rushing interviews delayed their departure to the Toc H Conference in Sheffield and Tubby, zigzagging through the traffic at a hair-raising pace, went flat out in the attempt to make up time.

The Conference at Sheffield, the first of its type, was a great success. Pat Leonard was there, also Pryor Grant, an Episcopal priest from New York who was spending his vacation inquiring into the nature and purpose of Toc H. In order that they could get to know each other better it was arranged that Pryor Grant should travel back to London in the car with P.B.C.; on the way they bade farewell to Pat Leonard, Tubby putting his arms round him and kissing him good-bye to the astonishment of the passers-by. It was the kind of thing he often did, half jestingly, half seriously, but one never laughed because it was never quite clear how seriously it was meant. Yet the gesture, coming from him, was essentially masculine and therefore never embarrassing.

On the trip to London Tubby did most of the talking and Pryor Grant, a shy man, was content to listen. In no other way could the American have received such a detailed and picturesque account of the origins and purpose of the Movement because Tubby, in possession of his favourite topic, spoke brilliantly and with rare humour. Grant afterwards said that his mounting admiration for this amazing man was dramatically confirmed a few months later by what he saw at the fourth Birthday Festival. The

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crowds were so great that three city churches adjoining All Hallows had to be requisitioned and the surprising ingenuity of the Vicar of All Hallows revealed itself in dealing with the almost impossible problem of accommodation. Obviously, thousands of men could not be thrown suddenly upon the surrounding hotels and so he persuaded the directors of the Baltic Shipping Co. to lend one of their passenger ships, S.S. *Baltriger*, in port at the time, as a large billet. It is doubtful whether anyone but Tubby would have come up with such a solution.

From Tower Hill that night thousands of men, arm in arm, streamed across the city to the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street singing as they went the marvellous harmonies of "Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones." And in the Hall Pryor Grant heard "Out of Many into One," the Birthday Hymn composed by Tubby at odd moments during the frantic rush of the previous five days. It was sung magnificently by the vast crowd to the tune of Aberystwyth, and as the words,

Out of heart-break, hope is born.
Rough the road to Promised Lands.
Bruising flint and piercing thorn:
Fire and tinder 'neath your hands!
Thus, though sword and sea divide,
God's love knows no East or West.
Where's the man would stand aside
From the tide of being blest:

Grey-flecked head, and eager boy,
Gownsmen, townsman, pastor, priest,
Troubadours of toil and joy,
Gather to this Household feast.
In the tuneful hearts of friends
Better music ne'er was blown:
From the land where hatred ends
Comes "Amen" in antiphon. Amen.

rang through the hall, and out into the night, there were not a few who thought them both a motto and a challenge.

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By now the growing strength of the Movement in England was obvious to the most casual observers: what was not so apparent was the world-wide character Toc H was beginning to assume and the need for skilled guidance and planning on an international scale. Towards the end of 1924 the Central Council unanimously decided that Tubby, accompanied by Pat Leonard, should, in the following years, visit those countries where Toc H was known to exist with the object of raising money for each of these infant branches and tightening the fraternal cords which bound them to the Old Country. The World Tour, as it came to be known, was essentially a voyage of discovery. But then, the Innkeeper of Talbot House, Poperinghe, had always insisted on following his "customers" wherever they might be or go.

CHAPTER XI

ON February 5, 1925, the S.S. *Antonia* sailed from Southampton for New York, carrying among her passengers the Rev. P. B. Clayton and the Rev. Pat Leonard on the first lap of their World Tour. There were some who were to suggest, rather naughtily, that the mission should have been known as "The Government-House Tour," but although they stayed with distinguished representatives of the Crown a glance over the itinerary shows that the people they met and by whom they were largely entertained were drawn from every walk of life. As further evidence it may be pointed out that Pat, a superb welter-weight boxer, had occasion to tame two bullies who were disrespectful to the Church in a Sydney pub. The incident finds no place in the official records.

The night before sailing was spent joyously in Southampton among an enthusiastic group of friends. Messages poured in from all over the kingdom, earnest of the place which Toc H and its Founder-Padre had come to occupy in the national affection.

A terse, yet descriptive summary of the trip is contained in some random notes taken by Pat Leonard from a diary he kept at the time, and as incidents are best seen through the eyes of those who experienced them we can do no better than reproduce them.

Thursday Feb. 5th. Left Southampton in SS. *Antonia*. A great send-off; arrived N.Y.C. Feb. 17th. Stayed at the General Theological Seminary. Called on Bishop Manning. Attended State Dinner to General Summerall, at which P.B.C. spoke for 6 or 7 minutes.

In States until March 20th and had a hectic time; visited Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, Ridgefield, Tafts School, Choate, Groton, etc. Everybody charming and most welcoming, but Tubby off colour most of the time. Note in

my log: "Tubby is worried and irritable, obviously far from well. N.Y.C. has been too much for him. Think he is suffering from a money versus manpower conflict. We have raised no money in accordance with our pledge, and have had a confused time in consequence." Nevertheless Tubby formed friendships and made contacts which have persisted. Too many to mention, but the Rev. William B. Lusk was as indefatigable as he was delightful.

In Canada from March 21st to May 6th. We began with a bang. A meeting in the Toronto Mark to welcome the Governor-General, Lord Byng; much enthusiasm, but beneath the surface, trouble in the House over ownership, which took a lot of sorting out. Tubby here, there and everywhere, in buoyant spirits. To Ottawa where we stayed in Government House, Montreal, where we had a Mark, but very few members.

A flying visit to Philadelphia to present a piece of timber from All Hallows, the church of William Penn's baptism, to Christ Church, Phila—the church of his maturity, followed by a day in New York with Pryor Grant. Back to Quebec, and a day with Canon Scott; and then by stages to Winnipeg by C.P.R. Tubby sowing seed all the time. In Winnipeg stayed in the Mark with Padre Cawley. Then to Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary—and so across the Rockies.

At Sicamous, waiting on the platform and eagerly scanning the train, was an elderly grey-haired man who had come 150 miles for a handshake with Tubby. It was an old habitué of Talbot House—"dear old Whitehead" Tubby called him—who had been his "churchwarden" in Poperinghe. A most touching reunion, one of many such, which proved Tubby's marvellous gift of inspiring love and devotion. The hundred and fifty miles had been made by river canoe and forest track, hard going all the way, for a "mouthful of human talk" with his beloved Padre.

Vancouver saw the usual nonstop succession of meetings, talks, interviews, sermons, branch meetings, parlour meetings, and heart to heart talks far into the night. Tubby paid a particularly historic visit to Chilliwack, and lit the torch in the hearts of several men, as was seen a few days later when, to quote my

diary: "At 8 p.m. ten grand fellows from Chilliwick led by Padre Ragg arrived for the meeting, having driven in 75 miles, prepared to drive out again and to arrive in time to milk the cows. The meeting in Christ Church Hall was a great success, about 200 present. Tubby talked, I showed the slides, Tubby talked again, sang 'Rogerum' and finally took Homegoing Prayers with the Cœur de Lion slide on the screen. Tubby then caught the night boat over to Victoria." This was typical and reproduced time and time again in a hundred places.

On May 6th we sailed in S.S. *Niagara* for New Zealand. The voyage was memorable for a very happy 24 hours in Honolulu with the Hon. George Carter, the Governor, and a fellow passenger from Vancouver. Soon after crossing the line occurred a never to be forgotten night. Tubby was on deck giving a lantern lecture to the first class passengers, I was below judging the crew's Boxing Competition. A steward arrived at the ring-side to say that the Rev. Mr. Clayton had been taken ill and was asking for me. I dashed up on deck to find him collapsed and unconscious, having been violently sick. All through the heat he had been working devotedly at letters and at an article on inter-communion, and I thought his collapse was due to over-strain. We got him into his bunk, and all night I sat in his cabin watching him and listening to his delirium, tossing and muttering to himself. I thought he was dying, and spent the long hours composing cables announcing his death. Glory be, toward morning he grew quieter, and eventually fell into a peaceful sleep. But it was a very forlorn Tubby that landed at Auckland. We stayed with Archbishop Averill whom we had picked up at Suva, and a great friend he proved himself to Toc H.

On June 12th on board S.S. *Maunganui* for Sydney. The Tasman sea in angry mood—so much so that we never saw the Capt. though we were at his table in the saloon. The result was that he wirelessed "No" to a cabled enquiry if the Rev. P. B. Clayton was on board. When we arrived at Sydney the Reception Committee had rolled up the red carpet and had gone home. On arriving at Admiralty House, Lord Forster, the Governor-General of Australia and a famous member of Toc H,

confessed that the welcoming arrangements had been cancelled and there was nothing to do—would Tubby like a game of tennis? Tubby said he would, so flannels and a racquet were found for him, and he took on a young Aide who had represented his Regiment in India, and was reputed to be first class. I thought I detected a certain air of condescension on his part in playing with a rather cylindrical and middle-aged parson, still obviously suffering from the effects of his illness. Tubby, however, soon showed the young soldier that he was out of his class by defeating him 6-1; 6-1. Till that moment I had no idea that Tubby was a first class performer, with a flowing stroke and a devastating smash.

Once we got going, things went with a swing—had a good press, made hosts of friends, got a permanent H.Q. and an office at No. 5 Hamilton Street given by Mr. Kelso King, and initiated 10 men to be the foundation of two Sydney groups. Tubby in great form, and making much capital out of the fact that he was born in Australia. The first week in Sydney raised our hopes considerably, and then came news of the death of Tubby's sister to whom he was devoted. He was very much overwhelmed by the news, and the next day in boarding a train he fell, and hurt his knee. The doctor's first diagnosis was a broken knee cap, but an X-ray showed no fracture; even so a torn ligament was bad enough, and much of the programme arranged by Tubby had to be cancelled or carried through by me.

Quite impossible to give more than an impression of the dashing about from one function to another. On many occasions Tubby, who has limited contact with Time, being obviously a child of Eternity, was late for appointments. A typical comment from my diary: "T. 25 minutes late for lunch date with—(a V.I.P.). The V.I.P. danced an impotent jig and went into lunch while I waited for T. Tubby quite unconscious of anything amiss was in brilliant form, and the V.I.P. completely captivated."

After three hectic weeks in Sydney T. went to Newcastle to stay with the Dean. "T. writes enthusiastically about N/c. Says Dean Crotty is all the fighting saints rolled into one."

Then to Brisbane and his native state of Queensland, where naturally he had a great welcome.

In due course to Melbourne and Adelaide, where he stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Barr-Smith. Our arrival had a touch of the comic about it, though it throws light on the limitless hospitality of the Barr-Smiths. Someone had told them that they had seen Mr. Clayton and his wife in Melbourne, so a letter was hastily written inviting Mrs. Clayton too. Tubby wired—"My companion is not Mrs. Clayton, but Leonard." Back came a reply: "Heartily welcome awaits you and Mrs. Leonard!" We had a great laugh about it when we met, and all scandal was averted.

Before Tubby left Mr. Barr-Smith gave him £5,000 to endow a Smith Australian Chaplaincy in memory of Elwin Wright, his son-in-law, killed in action. The same day Mr. Kelso King gave £550 to pay first year's salary of a chaplain for Sydney and N.S.W.

While in Queensland Tubby's train stopped at Helidon, he got out for a cup of tea and was attacked by a dog. The owner turned out to be a R.C. priest, Fr. Lynch. No great damage was done except to T.'s trousers, and they joked about the dog's cleverness in recognising a heretic, and parted good friends. A month later I was passing through Helidon, and Fr. Lynch was on the station, to enquire after T., and to say that he remembered Toc H daily at his altar.

At the beginning of September Geoffrey Tetley came out from England to act as A.D.C. to Tubby, who said good-bye to Australia on September 19th for Singapore, leaving me behind to tie up the loose ends before rejoining him in Ceylon. Of T.'s tour of Malaya I know nothing at first hand—but Geoff Tetley had a thrilling story about a wild rush the length of Java to catch a boat. T. hired a racing car and driver who tied down the button of his electric horn and drove madly through the night. T.'s eldest brother, Jack, was Commissioner of Singapore. Between them they put Toc H on the map at four or five places in Malaya.

Towards the end of October, I rejoined T. in Colombo, but only had a fleeting glimpse of him, for he left next day for Calcutta, having sown good seed in Colombo and in Kandy.

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We met again in Calcutta, where T. had made many excellent contacts and from among the leading men formed an Indian Council for Toc H.

And so to Bombay where Tubby's brother, H. B. Clayton, was Municipal Commissioner. Among other achievements, we started a Toc H group for Indians—mostly students at St. Xavier's College.

November 28th we started homeward from Bombay. Tubby left the ship at Suez, while Geoffrey Tetley and I went on to Port Said, rejoining Tubby in Jerusalem where he was staying with General Plumer, his old Army Commander and then Governor of Jerusalem. Once again he collected the cream of young manhood stationed in or near Jerusalem, and left a grand group of Toc H with its headquarters at St. George's Cathedral.

And so back to England, arriving on December 19th—just in time for the Birthday Festival in the Albert Hall, London—and a marvellous welcome to the little man on the completion of his World Tour.

The globe had been circled, but now came the formidable task of justifying that ambitious gesture by a greater Toc H efficiency and understanding on an international level. It was not going to be easy.

CHAPTER XII

WHEN Tubby arrived on Tower Hill flanked by Toc H and an impressive record behind him the inhabitants of Eastcheap were typically unmoved: parsons were not exactly their favourite companions and they had no particular reason to believe that the new incumbent of All Hallows would be different from the others.

The first thing they noticed about the Vicar was that he worked as hard and twice as long as any of them. Draymen carting barrels of fish to the markets through the dampness of early winter mornings would see his ample frame disappearing into All Hallows and on their way back, about nine o'clock, he would hail them and talk about the kids, the football prospects, or even fish if they liked it that way. It was not long before Eastcheap conferred its most coveted accolade—"e's a decent bloke," which, after all, was not so far removed from the opinion of the Salient: "The Padre's all right."

His days on the Hill, always allowing for the unexpected and his frequent absences, adhered to a more or less regular pattern. Between 7 and 8 a.m. he would make his way to the church, rarely omitting the ritual of feeding sugar to the cart horses he passed in Trinity Square. Leaving the church at about nine-fifteen he would distribute more sugar and, heedless of breakfast, chat cheerfully with drivers and fishporters from whom he picked up an enormous amount of useful information about the East End and its habits. After a hurried cup of tea came the morning's correspondence which sometimes ran into hundreds of letters, all of which had to be read and, in many cases, answered; this exacting task was complicated by constant telephone interruptions and Tubby's disconcerting habit of drawing old envelopes absent-mindedly from his pockets on the backs of which certain facts and information had been scribbled the day previously. These

he would scan and then, realising what he was reading, hastily summon one of his curates or aides: "Go and find out all about the Billingsgate Mission," he would say, or "Go and see Mr. So-and-so in an office in Eastcheap, and take him this book," or "Ring up Mr. X and ask him to lunch; I promised to show him the Hill today."

It was an unusual morning that was not broken by visitors and appointments. Then came luncheon with a half a dozen assorted men to be shown a new scheme or helped to run an old one; immediately afterwards the Vicar would conduct his guests on a tour of the house, its lunch-room, dormitories, skittle-alley or plod for the thousandth time round the Hill, expatiating on the Roman Wall, cursing the ugly warehouses, and conjuring up a brave vision of beauty and peace in their stead.

The guests having departed, office visiting began and those who were fortunate enough to be apprenticed to the staff of All Hallows received each afternoon that Tubby was in residence a lesson in parochialia that was masterly. Only one hundred and eighty-three people lived in the quarter of a square mile of the City which comprised All Hallows parish, but some twenty thousand worked in it every day of the week and it was upon these that he determined to concentrate. They lived, he said, in dormitory suburbs and arrived home too late at night for the local parson to get to know them; it was therefore the duty of the clergy of All Hallows to visit the offices regularly, but two rules had to be observed. He, the priest or parish visitor, must never ask for money and he must never stay when a man was obviously busy. The technique was simple. The visitor took a bundle of pamphlets, probably describing the lunch-time activities of the old church, and dived into an office, a procedure, many a young aide discovered, requiring a high degree of fearlessness.

It was a joy to watch Tubby at work on these occasions. First, to see the aloofness of a commissionaire slowly unbend before a chuckling reminiscence of the "real old days"—i.e. Flanders; then to observe the faces of forty or fifty typists gradually light up as they listened to the gorgeous flow of mixed flattery and common sense and realised, with a kind of wonderment, that they were being treated as personalities and not machines. He

was given a small cocker spaniel named Smuts by Lord Hugh Beresford—described as “the best curate I ever had”—who, by his tail wagging friendliness, effected many unexpected introductions, and one of the Vicar’s stock forms of entry into a roomful of typists in a large London firm was “Go on, Smuts, talk to the pretty ladies.” Needless to say, with such an unorthodox entry before a hundred entire strangers, the ice was immediately broken. And, finally, to behold some managing director who prided himself on being “strictly business” in office hours and rather hard-boiled, melting before this surprising little parson who, uncannily, seemed to sense the need and place for all the veneer but who, in five minutes, had struck a deeper chord and had reached the human being behind the black coat, enthralled him with the living conditions of modern seamen or the plight of lepers.

“Often,” wrote Jonathan Graham, “I have taken an instant dislike to some business man and then, when we left the office, have been astounded at the insight of someone who could say, ‘Well, old boy, I think we’ve got a superb man there to deal with the whole problem of the tanker fleet’—or whatever it might be.”

Visiting ended by 5 p.m., when the City emptied, and Tubby met with his curates and aides for Evensong at 5.40 p.m. to be followed by the signing of letters before the secretaries left and supper at six-thirty. This over—he seldom noticed what he ate or remembered it afterwards—there would be time for a talk with one of his clergy or staff, and then dictation for four or five hours to his night secretary. “Christianity was built up with the unnecessary letter,” he once stated, and his building up of Toc H certainly involved him in an endless correspondence—an expression of his extreme thoughtfulness for others. No one who had fostered or loved Toc H in any part of the world was forgotten.

Introduce into this day a number of overseas visitors, letters advancing personal problems, new schemes or invitations, speeches at Toc H branches in the London area, sermon preparation, underground railway journeys in which he read constantly, details of house management submitted to his final authority, a pat on the back or a handshake and encouraging word for a host of friends in tube stations, buses, parks, up and down the staircases of the London Houses, and we get an idea of the unbelievable energy

expended by this man whom many regarded, and still regard, as possibly the busiest in the capital.

Yet this energy had its dangers and sometimes blunted his appreciation of those less vigorously disposed. He expected the impossible of his aides and curates, and became extremely irritable if through sickness or circumstance he was immobilised. Our Lord, he often pointed out, only promised rest to those who travailed and were heavy laden: and he interpreted the command to labour without mercy for himself or for his associates. Many a young man who had lost common sense in his devotion became too tired to love and too busy to think, and few indeed were those who would check themselves and say bluntly, as one man did: "Tubby, I would gladly die for you, but not after midnight."

For one so attuned to the sighing or singing of the human heart he was oddly insensitive to the limitations, yes, and the weaknesses of other men.

It was puzzling to find in Tubby with his love for men and ceaseless movement, his conspicuous preference for the market place over the cloister, a political disinterestedness that bordered on naïveté. When the General Strike dramatically froze British industry in 1926 he rallied Toc H members and his friends to man the services and help avert a national calamity, but in the inevitable post mortem debates that followed, and there were many, he displayed little interest in the actual causes of the Strike and made no worth-while suggestion as to how it might best have been avoided. Seemingly, it never occurred to him that behind all the unemployment he coped with so courageously at All Hallows, behind all the difficulties of open-air oratory on the Hill in which he encouraged those of his staff who undertook it, lay a vast human problem that could only be solved by intelligent political action.

These, nevertheless, were excusable faults in a man who preferred human beings to systems (a most unmodern trait!) and whose imagination was so blithely arranged that he could calmly aver, on more than one occasion: "There's more truth in legend than in fact." Assuredly he was in a position to know because legend and fact jostled each other on Tower Hill where memory held the door. From his St. Paul's days when, with Cecil Rushton,

he had explored the devious ways of the metropolis he had loved London with the passion of the convert, for he was a Londoner by adoption and not by birth. And now, from his vantage point on the Hill the whole noble drama of British history sprang to life before his eyes: the Past moved up to walk with the Present, and the Future glowed encouragingly. His mind leapt beyond the slovenly warehouses and confined streets and he saw the Hill as it once was and as it might be again if energy conscripted imagination to its service. It was fortunate that Charles Wakefield, himself a Londoner by adoption, caught Tubby's vision and quietly resolved to dedicate his considerable means and influence to its fulfilment.

It happened that certain members of the Corn Exchange asked the clergy of All Hallows to hold a service commemorating those Londoners who had fallen upon the Somme on July 1st, 1916, and Tubby, as an afterthought, sent a last minute telegram to Wakefield requesting him to come if he were free. Most unexpectedly Wakefield turned up, and after the service, which was overwhelming, they met in the North Aisle where they discussed P.B.C.'s plans for the future of Tower Hill. Each had known the other by reputation, and each was aware of the other's love and knowledge of London. Tubby had the energy and imagination to transform this most venerable section of the City, now ugly and abused, into a place of beauty, to restore what had been an ancient "Park or Pleasaunce" to a public promenade second to none in Europe, and Charles Wakefield had the means and experience to give reality to the priest's labours. "The soul of London," wrote P.B.C., "dignity and freedom, were in his code the ultimate allegiance."

In point of fact, Tubby had already drawn up a plan at that early date and shared it with a number of old friends, most of whom felt it was little more than a pleasant dream. But others, namely Dr. Montague James, the Provost of Eton, Lord Goschen, Sir Kenyon Vaughan Morgan, M.P., Captain Sir Ion Hamilton Benn, Churchwarden of All Hallows, Sir Follett Holt, and such City men as Evelyn Hubbard and F. R. S. Balfour, viewed it encouragingly and promised any support within their powers.

The plan contained eight leading recommendations which, if carried out, would effectively restore beauty and prestige to

the Hill. It concluded with the plea "that the City of London should reopen the negotiations conducted by the Corporation when Tower Bridge was built. The proposition then was that Great Tower Hill should be handed over to the City. These negotiations should soon be renewed, upon the basis that the City should reclaim its ancient and most reasonable control up to its ancient Wall. This step would bring Great Tower Hill as a whole within the City Boundary once more; thus preventing the Hill, from being ill-lit, ill-paved, and disreputable. . . . The Roman Wall, once cleared, would then complete by far the finest vista of antiquity within the whole of London, leading down to the Tower and to the River. A new Trafalgar Square for the City, far more commodious and far more historical, would thus be given to the Empire."

The steps by which to achieve this gallant prospect he listed carefully:

- (1) A campaign concerned with the removal by 1948 (when the last tenancy expires), if not before, of Myers' monstrous warehouse. A vital step, and the key to everything; since this huge building blocks the way to every real reform of Tower Hill.
- (2) The removal of the small mis-shapen building set upon the Byward Street pavement in 1911 by the Underground Railway.
- (3) The creation of a children's tidal playground upon the long shingle beach in front of Tower walk; to make it safe—it is unsafe at present. Accidents, fatal to children, occur from time to time, because no guardianship is yet provided.
- (4) The public, with the Constable's permission, should be admitted to the Western Moat on days when the band plays there; and that a second Park Keeper should be provided in the long stretch of Tower Gardens, where conduct is at present none too good, and hours of opening are too short for the public to enjoy the Gardens to the full, and yet too long for one Park Keeper, who cannot be everywhere at once.
- (5) A splendid section of the Roman Wall had been pulled

down by the Underground authorities. This open railway cutting can be roofed over at no great expense, turf laid upon the roof, and a new Square created, giving public access to a fine surviving section of London's ancient Wall.

- (6) And finally, the Crown Commissioners, who own the freehold of 22 and 23 Tower Hill, a place now let on a yearly lease, should soon reclaim this lease and create here an Eastern City Garage, thus clearing the abominable misuse of Trinity Square (itself the true Tower Hill) as a mere parking place, and aiding the whole traffic problem in the neighbourhood. This Crown Garage would pay as well as any tenancy, and would be a great assistance to the police and to the public generally.

What appealed to Charles Wakefield was the level sanity of the plan. Each clause was specific and practical, designed to correct injustice or repair ugliness; incidentally, the whole Tower Hill Reform Scheme is an excellent example of P.B.C.'s powers of concentration and perseverance. It was conceived at a time when he was extraordinarily busy, and yet he brought to its elaboration a single-minded enthusiasm that never wavered through the years. Step by step, waiting on this committee, worrying that official, gnawing at problem after problem, he moved forward until Tower Hill slowly began to regain its reputation as a cheerful promenade. But this is to anticipate.

Wakefield told Tubby that he was quite prepared to help Tower Hill, providing the Alderman of Tower Ward consented. Since the consent was not at once vouchsafed, Lord Wakefield (then Sir Charles), restrained by City custom, could take no immediate part in Tower Hill Improvement. However, on that afternoon began his famous friendship for All Hallows and, without neglect of earlier charities—principally concerned with the poor children of London—he spent half a million pounds sterling upon the Church and its enterprises before his death in 1941.

Meanwhile, pending permission to assist the Hill, he bought and fenced the Pool of Peace at Spanbroekmolen, one of the great mine-craters blown in preparation for the Battle of Messines in 1917, pursuing Tubby's suggestion in *The Times*. A year later he

purchased Talbot House itself and gave what appeared to be in those days an ample endowment of £10,000. In 1932 the succeeding Alderman, Sir Howard Button, gave him permission to help Tower Hill; and from that moment onward an invincible dynamic was released. The Tower Hill Improvement Scheme was officially founded with H.M. Queen Mary as its Patron and Lord Wakefield of Hythe as its President. This influential Trust thereupon pursued systematic plans for the redemption and rededication of the Hill for public purposes. St. Katherine's Rents, the site of the Myers warehouse—given by Robert Denton, Chaplain of All Hallows, to the Royal Foundation of St. Katherine in 1371 for the benefit of poor and sick clergy—was re-purchased for £50,000, and the Queen's Treasurer, Mr. R. C. Norman, transferred the property to take effect in 1948 when the lease finally ran out. One by one encroaching buildings were acquired to be demolished or handed over to the appropriate authorities. A playground and paddling beach for the City children planned by Tubby was at last achieved, and every year since then (except in the war) four hundred and fifty thousand London children have reaped the benefit from May until October. In addition, Everyman's House, 42 Trinity Square—a valuable benefaction bestowed and endowed in 1929—provides for a great diversity of junior City workers, and in the course of time has become a welfare centre of far-reaching influence.

Much was accomplished in the years before the War, and more planned. Oddly enough the Blitz, horrible though it was, brought its benefits; buildings, hideous vestiges of the nineteenth century, which might have taken years to remove were demolished in the space of minutes. "During one of the many night attacks on the City," recorded Gregory Chase, "amidst the crash of falling masonry, I heard a Cockney wit murmur: 'Tower 'ill Improvements is gettin' on!' capped by another with 'Better make 'itler Vice President!'"

* * *

During the months following his appointment to All Hallows Tubby continued to live at No. 23 Queen's Gate Gardens, moving towards the end of 1923 to All Hallows' Porchroom which he shared with his curate, George Moore. He afterwards transferred to No. 7 Tower Hill, and thence to 42 Trinity Square; yet

the surroundings seemed scarcely to vary because the atmosphere in each place remained very much the same. Although he could endure discomfort with utter cheerfulness, his personal quarters, especially "No. 7" and "42," were surprisingly snug and comfortable. The distinguishing element was the happy admixture of vitality and repose. An open fireplace, generously aglow in winter time, book-lined walls and easy chairs invited friendliness, and to his London study, as to the Chaplain's Room in Poperinghe, would come men (estimated at over 3,000 a year), in groups or individually, from all parts of the world and every station in life to share his wit and listen to quaint wisdom. Hospitality with him acquired a degree of spontaneous artistry that could have few counterparts elsewhere.

To a young Government official home on furlough from India or the Federated Malay States the "Old Man" and his study were one of the last, and most typically English memories before returning to duty. He would come to say "good-bye" but Tubby would constrain him to stay to tea and he would be glad he had done so. Seated by a window overlooking the Hill with the turrets of the Tower in the distance and the muffled hoots of the river tugs coming through the autumn air, he would listen to the Padre, with the deft skill of the poet, unfolding the mystery of the great City's ancient heart. Perhaps P.B.C.'s mood was impish, and the books upon the shelves, well thumbed and loved, would be recruited to support his extravagant excursions into the past. He has been talking, on this occasion, about the Crutched Friars and medieval London. He goes to the bookshelf, reaches up and takes down a volume. It is old and beautifully bound. He thumbs over the pages, puffing the while at a large and rather insanitary bent pipe.

"You know," he murmurs half to himself, "some of the Crutched Friars who used to live in this quarter were really wicked old men. It's been said that—er—few—er—buxom wenches were safe from their—er—attentions in the lanes of Tower Hill after dark. Listen to this bit . . ." He chuckles, and reads an unadorned account of a trial before an ecclesiastical court in which some frolicsome old friar had been arraigned for conduct unbefitting to the Cloth.

The young man at the window catches the humanity of Tubby,

his sense of mischief, and as the afternoon mists soften the outlines of Tower Hill he almost sees the black cowed priests moving stealthily through the streets and hears the accosted maidens shriek—often more in pleasure than in fear. Such is the magic of the poet's spell.

Those books on the shelves of his study at Tower Hill were an index to much in his character. In an age reared on the pernicious "best seller," Tubby believed, most unfashionably, that the art of intelligent reading was the art of intelligent rejection. Although his reading was scant, judged by the eclectic standing of the literary reviewer, he was constantly noting and quoting from what he did read. Any author with a knowledge of men and their ways enthralled him: Kipling at all times, Denis Reitz's *Commando*, Hakluyt, G. K. C., Scott Holland, Conrad, Conan Doyle's *The White Company*, Tomlinson, not to mention Shakespeare, Pepys, Boswell, and the egregious Mandeville. This, naturally, is a haphazard selection of authors he loved and had mastered, and so thorough was the mastery that at a crisis in his life he took down a story of Conrad's and found in it parallels to all the phases of that crisis. Yet none stood higher in his esteem than Dickens, unless it were John Bunyan. Dickens had loved London, and Tubby loved both London and Dickens. But, above all, stood Bunyan. For years his method of communicating with close friends over the world was by illusion to a line and page of a certain edition of *The Pilgrims Progress*, and quite often, before a select audience, he would open his remarks by observing: "If you haven't read John Bunyan, then it's not very much use listening to me." All his writing, especially hymns and poems, owe much to Bunyan's influence.

His books were companions, their worth well tested, that gave him confidential and whimsical glimpses of the men who thronged his rooms, but his most intimate knowledge came *from the men themselves*. He had an unquenchable thirst for information about all parts of the world and the conditions under which the white man worked. A constant experience on the Hill was to hear introductions like this: "Come over here, Winnipeg, old boy, and meet Katanga Gold Mines," or, more prosaically, "George, here is Harrow Weald on my right and Clapham Common over there

in the corner." The variety of guests was astonishing, and sometimes unnerving to those too conscious of social or intellectual distinctions—that is, until the leaven of their host's humour began to work. Novelists, peers, porters, grocers' assistants, captains R.N., and generals, all thronged his table, listened and talked and, as often as not, stayed away from important jobs to do so.

It was this sureness of touch in dealing with people of all kinds that made him completely un-self-conscious in his piety. No one could be more embarrassing over prayers in curious places than P.B.C.—and none more at ease with himself. He never missed midday prayers, whatever the place or circumstances, and his various aides supply hair-raising examples of this peculiar fervency in all parts of the world. A group of bareheaded padres, business men, consular representatives, who had come to bid him farewell on the Port Said platform, huddled round some suitcases in the midst of a crowd of yelling Egyptian porters and passengers streaming in both directions . . . the *Te Deum* in a taxi crossing London Bridge or on a cross-Channel steamer . . . himself and a companion crunched in an alcove beneath the stairs of a big bank . . . or, more suitably, a group of them and a dog on a moorside in Scotland before devouring a picnic lunch. He had a disconcerting habit of making those present pray out loud with him, each in rotation, and one aide recalls him chuckling, after the conclusion of a committee meeting *and* prayers on Toc H in Mediterranean ports—a medley of army, navy and civilians—"I really think, old boy, that must have been the first time Major X has ever prayed out loud in his life!" You might almost suspect it was done from devilry if you had not known the sincerity of the man.



It was perhaps inevitable that his love for men should eventually lead to an association with his other great love, the sea. This happened in two ways. In 1925 a small body of naval members of Toc H became busy at Malta. There were only thirty-five of them, but they were men of calibre, drawn mainly from those whom he had known in Portsmouth in the old days, some risen in the ranks, others commissioned from the Lower Deck. And the work which they began was of such significance that the Com-

mander-in-Chief approved of the official formation of a Toc H Group. Therefore when Lord Plumer in 1926 found himself growing old and near his end, he dictated certain letters to Admirals whom he knew to be like-minded, and thus it came to be that Tubby received an altogether unexpected visit on Tower Hill from Admiral Sir W. W. Fisher, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet. That visit was the commencement of a long and intimate association with the Royal Navy, although his brief sojourn with the Grand Fleet in Scapa Flow in 1916 had been his first experience of life among "the big ships."

"In 1932," he later wrote, "Admiral Fisher called me to Malta in H.M.S. *Acasta*. Upon that trip we ran into worse weather than any of us had experienced—we actually missed Malta in the storm! I then spent several months with the Med. Fleet, and did the same in 1933. In 1935 to '36 I spent almost a year still as his guest. Chaplains were scarce, and I, as an old gadget who had been ill in 1934, regained my health at sea under God's hand. I started as Chaplain of the *Beagle*, and finished up in 1936 with an unofficial parish which included twenty-seven destroyers and eight mine-sweepers."

The place he achieved for himself and the Movement is borne out by this extract from an affectionate letter written by Admiral Fisher from his Flag Ship in 1936: "... Meanwhile there is lots for you to do but *it is all done* by your mere presence in the Fleet and *I want you to remember that*, and not tire yourself out or worry about anything—just stop with us and throw a word here and there... I believe the Fleet at this moment to be the most important part of the Empire and to have you in it of supreme value."

His other official connection with the sea sprang from his friendship with Sir John Cadman. The versatile Chairman of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company had gone from Birmingham University soon after World War I to give his expert aid to the firm for a few months. He soon became invaluable, not only in laboratory work and as a noted mineralogist; his business faculties and remarkable powers of administration became highly prized by the Company, and his promotion ran like magic. Within five years he found himself the Chairman of a concern which—with the British Government holding half the shares—was to pay a dividend

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in 1949 amounting to fifty million sterling. It was John Cadman who brought to birth the Iraq Petroleum Company which today is a great concern. This man, then, whose drive and muscular mind had built one of the world's mighty organisations, saw the need of religion in business and appealed to Tubby in 1927 to find a chaplain who would go to Abadan. Tubby's choice fell on Lancelot Reed, who had been Senior Chaplain of his division in the B.E.F., and Cadman appointed him without delay. From that moment began the historic connection between Toc H and the British Oil Industry, both on land and sea.

As the overseas commitments of Toc H gradually widened and the experience of its leaders deepened the Vicar of All Hallows, as the Founder-Padre, was increasingly consulted by responsible elements in the national life. With the passing of time the Toc H members of the House of Commons steadily increased until they numbered seventy-eight, most of whom were P.B.C.'s personal friends: this was a Christian cadre of unrivalled sympathy and talent in the very heart of the Commons. Consequently, there arose the custom of inviting him during each session to address them in the big committee-room about problems he had come across at home or abroad. On some occasions these talks had far-reaching results, like that which built a team of volunteers for Leper Colonies; and since 1932 Toc H has contributed over ninety thousand pounds to this especial need. Within the House of Lords, too, a brave company, headed by his cousin, Field-Marshal the Earl of Cavan, and his staunch friends the late Duke of Devonshire and the Marquis of Salisbury stood ready to support. Lord Baden Powell became an early President of Toc H, and it was an annual habit for him and Tubby to make their communion side by side in the old village church of Bentley, standing just below Pax Hill.

Like most infant Movements Toc H, in the first years, was acutely conscious of its origins and, in spite of itself, dominated by the personality of the Founder-Padre. This was not Tubby's fault. From the very outset he had insisted that Toc H was not "a one man's show," and he had sighed with relief with the granting of the Royal Charter in 1922; but it was not easy to consign to the background a man whose architectonic powers were

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everywhere manifest. And for his part, Tubby discovered—perhaps not too regretfully—that he could not escape his destiny. With the expansion of the Movement came also the increase of his personal responsibility and he soon found that where there had been a dozen demands upon his patience and time there were now a hundred. However, it was as fire to a salamander and he found himself growing with each new challenge.

One large cause of regret in those early years was that M. Camerlynck, whom the years had failed to mellow, refused to open the doors of Talbot House, Poperinghe, to pilgrims, whoever they might be. It was a difficult situation because, although several pilgrimages had been made to the Salient, the demands to visit the Old House itself, which had given birth to Toc H, grew more and more clamorous. The Queen of the Belgians and the Prince of Wales both requested this courtesy of M. Camerlynck, but to no avail. It was decided in 1926, therefore, that Tubby should venture to Poperinghe at the head of a party of pilgrims and trust to luck. The party included Jock Gillespie and Padre Muirhead who took the precaution of going to the Belgian Embassy to consult with Prince de Croye. The Prince had an encouraging idea! He knew the Burgomaster of Poperinghe well, had fought with him during the War, and although he could do nothing direct for the pilgrims he would give them a note to the Burgomaster, asking him to plead their cause with the owner of Talbot House. The Burgomaster co-operated splendidly, and M. Camerlynck agreed to twenty visitors at a time in case the house was not strong enough (how the Allied Armies would have guffawed!). The following extract from Gillespie's diary describes that first visit of pilgrims to the Old House, after permission had been granted:

“Tubby celebrated next morning on the Great Stone of Remembrance in the Reservoir Cemetery at Ypres. Most of the main body went to Poperinghe by train and the women by bus. This time the doors were open and Tubby went in with the first twenty people to the Chapel. The rest of us, awaiting our turn, went round the garden with the ‘Gen.’ The brick wall on the left was still pockmarked by shell-fire. ‘Gen’

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took us down the garden and showed us the spot where the carpenter's bench was found. Finally it was our turn to go upstairs. As we mounted the narrow stairway we met the first party coming down and one saw by their faces that they had not only seen, but also had understood their vision. The loft had resumed its use as an attic but at one end still stood the dais that had supported the Carpenter's bench and there, in front of this, stood Tubby with bowed head; a disused pram stood in one corner and some onions were laid out on the floor. We all instinctively knelt as we entered for we knew that the ground whereon we stood was holy. Then kneeling there Tubby told us, in that biblical directness of phrase which he uses when most moved, the reason for his changed use when he celebrates."

That was the first of many pilgrimages to Poperinghe, some weighted with solemnity, all lightened, consciously or unconsciously, with humour because Tubby had learnt in troubled ways that humour is close to God. In 1929 Talbot House became the permanent possession of Toc H when it was purchased and endowed by Lord Wakefield as a perpetual shrine for the Movement. Henceforth, pilgrims of all nations, knit in the fellowship of suffering and hope, were to swell the steady stream making its way to the little Belgian town.



It required a genuine talent for selection to balance the various duties that fell to his lot. His judgment, fortunately, seldom faltered when dealing with matters cognate to the souls of men and he realised, as did all who shared his vision, that the Guild Church was, and must be, his primary concern. Toc H, if it were to survive, must have a stabilised heart, and that heart was now beating steadily on Tower Hill. But despite his deep attachment to All Hallows, and the recognition of its essential place in the scheme of things, he was well aware that men's souls are not won through architecture. "Churches were not built for centuries after the Church began," he wrote in *Fishers of Men*. "The Roman Empire was not won for Christ by parishes and abbeyes

and cathedrals; worship was in the lanes and by the rivers, instruction in the byways, and sermons in the market places. The whole tremendous growth took place without a single dedicated building. The buildings bequeathed to us, however fair and precious, are, therefore, not the instruments with which the world was won. . . . The circumstances that we must face today render it very certain that to confine our effort within church buildings is to desert the field where Christ would see us striving. The homes must be re-won, re-consecrated with gatherings for prayer and sacrament in common living-rooms. The Gospel must again go forward in earnest conversation everywhere. The offices and workshops, the pavements, wharves, and the mills, must hear again of Jesus from His friends."

Whatever his affection for the Hill or his concern for Toc H with its infinity of problems and challenges there can be small doubt that his first and most abiding love was for his fellow men. Men always had the confidence that he knew them personally, and valued them. Certainly his remarkable memory for names and faces retrieved many an awkward situation in his travels, and occasionally landed him in amusing predicaments. One evening he was packed off to the Old Pauline Annual Dinner which was being held in a large London hotel. When he returned at midnight he was chuckling. He said that he had arrived at the hotel and had met a friend going through the door. Together they went to a kind of official anteroom. Here they had sherry with the guests and then sat down to dinner. Tubby was enjoying this reunion with old friends tremendously when a thought suddenly occurred to him. He leaned across to the man opposite, and said:

"I never thought you were an Old Pauline. I always thought you were a Marlburian."

"So I am," replied the man.

"But what are you doing at an Old Pauline Dinner?"

"This isn't an Old Pauline Dinner," was the reply, "it's a Marlburian."

There were about ten dinners being held in the hotel. Tubby had got into the wrong one, and yet he knew nearly everyone there.

Perhaps if one were asked to define his technique in dealing with men it would amount simply to this—he had faith in them.

He had faith in their integrity, in their capacity to sacrifice, in their ability to respond to a challenge. He won men by trusting them, and, after all, Jesus did very much the same; he was often disappointed, it is true, but never disillusioned. It was this faith in men, backed by imagination and humour, that was the ground of his friendships—real, deep friendships by the hundred, with royalty and unemployed, with capitalist and worker, men of all ages from eighteen to eighty. And friendship with man he counted the halfway house to friendship with God: "You'll never get a man," he once remarked, "to say 'our Father' unless he can first say 'our padre.'" But a man says "our Father" or "our padre" more easily, at first, in the privacy of a home or club than in a public auditorium, and that is why he preferred to talk to them in small groups round a fire, in a railway carriage or at his own table. He was always for private reasoning, persuading, allegorising—a gradual process by which a man's will was captured, so that he went out and did some work. His method is perfectly illustrated by an incident that occurred during one of his Mediterranean trips.

One Sunday, in company with Jonathan Graham, he presented himself, with a formal introduction, to the Consul at a certain port and obtained an invitation to lunch. They sat down to a superb meal at a long, polished table in a vast dining-room and the Consul, be-monocled and immaculately groomed in tropical whites, though polite, seemed ill-disposed to talk. He affected, to start with, a lack of interest in idealism, and a careless, rather weary man-of-the-world attitude. Tubby wore this down by the most gentle strokes of daring, gradually unfolding before his companion the queer, shy character who was their host: by half-past three on a stifling summer's day, the Consul had pledged himself to help Toc H for evermore and, more particularly, to preside at a meeting to be held that night at a club in town. He came, completely won, and still with that shy haughty manner, unaccustomed to such a friendly atmosphere. He started his speech in this way:

"Gentlemen, today I'm feeling rather like the Unicorn in *Alice through the Looking Glass*, who, before he saw Alice, thought that 'children' were fabulous monsters. I never knew

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that a man like Padre Clayton existed, except as a mythical animal: now I'm tempted to say with the Unicorn:

'Well, now we *have* seen each other, if you'll believe in me, I'll believe in you.'

And, so saying, he hit upon the very quality by which Tubby won difficult men to the cause of righteousness. Yet not all Tubby's friends were difficult nor had they to be won by righteousness; many were large men by any design whose souls had been "touched by the finger of God" and who, in any age or environment, would have stood four-square against the forces of wickedness. His friends were legion, but standing in a ghostly vanguard are Herbert Fleming, Senior Chaplain of the Guards, of whom, when he died in 1926, he said "Perhaps his old regiment, the Guards, had been ordered into some sublime celestial action and asked to have their padre with them"; John Hollis, who lost an arm at Loos but lived to raise £70,000 for Disabled Servicemen before his death in 1941; William Temple who, had he lived, would have been the greatest Archbishop the See of Canterbury had ever known; Frederick Baggallay, recently dead, who had gone up from Rugby in 1905 as a scholar to Exeter which Tubby entered in the same year; and "Siddy" whose unexpected death on November 28, 1926, was a grievous blow.

Tubby returned from his world tour of 1925 to find a very different Siddy from the man he had left. Gone was the old insouciance, the languid charm that seemed inseparable from his civilised person. His habit of drifting here and there on an unpredictable schedule of his own had been abandoned, and he appeared to be gyrating in aimless circles. "He felt himself unprofitable," wrote P.B.C. after his death, "his delicate sense of the ridiculous was turned to his own bosom. He did not discuss this at length even with me; but it was plain he dreaded becoming a mere oddity, a philanthropic free-lance, without form, and void." And then came the news of the greatest decision of Siddy's life. He had found his Vocation! Surrendering wealth and leisure, in December 1925 he entered the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield as a postulant, not for the Ministry, but for lay brotherhood. Tubby saw him twice during the following year, and this is what he wrote after the hurt of his departure had lessened:

"Once under circumstances of work and silence during a short retreat for secular clergy, whither I came, most secular of all, I marked my old friend Siddey toiling with the wheelbarrow, bent to his task, inconsequent of mien, already altered towards happiness; and with a certain measure of discretion, which rested on his brow baptised in sweat. I saw him in the Chapel, dreaming, dreaming, then breaking from his dreams into the concentration of hard prayer. He waited on me once or twice in the refectory, wearing a great coarse apron. A few weeks later Mirfield had a holiday. He came away, and found himself in the Porchroom with three brown pennies in his trouser pocket. His problem was to look at a good map marking the bus routes whither he would go, and to discover which of the said bus routes would take him farthest in the right direction for the one penny he could rightly spare. This planning he enjoyed incredibly, measuring routes with far more delicate precision than he had used towards his war-time compasses. I took him down and showed him the new crypt, then recently discovered. It delighted him, and he suggested Francis as its patron. We little knew that a year hence his own name would be coupled with St. Francis, in whose 700th anniversary year Siddey saw fit to die."

A week before his profession he was taken suddenly ill. It was an acute appendix which developed into general peritonitis: the operation went badly. His relatives, numerous and eminent, were summoned to his bedside, and he took leave of them. Having made his Confession and received the Last Sacrament he prepared to meet death with something of his old nonchalance; it is said that his demeanour during those last days won a sceptical nurse back to God. The last moments came and Siddey's lips moved beneath the gingery moustache, the one thing he had never sacrificed, and the priest leaned over to catch his last words. He may not have seen a mocking look in Siddey's eye, but his utterly astounded ear caught the words: "Well, what about a bottle of fizz?" And smiling, Siddey died.

On a gaunt hill, overlooking the grim smoky valley which contains Huddersfield and Wakefield, there stands out against the sky a solitary apse, its western end boarded up. Some day, they say, it will be a great Cathedral. And on the brow of the

hill, near what will be the western portal of that Cathedral, the monks have made a circular patch of greensward, with a Calvary at one end. There Siddy now lies—above the hermit's cave once occupied by Benson. He has joined the Community of the Resurrection.

Yes, Tubby was fortunate in his friends.

It was in the following year, 1927, that he met "Ludo," the same year that his father died. The Claytons had always been a united family and the death of his father (his mother had died shortly after the First War), though an old man, had enlarged the emptiness in his heart. The charm and tact of Sir Ludovic Charles Porter were to carry him over the next few months, and prove, in themselves, an inestimable asset to Toc H. "Ludo" appeared on the scene quite by chance, as the result of a bet, but having met Tubby he returned, not once but many times, to end by "staking his claim" at the Padre's side.

In many ways Ludo was similar to Siddy; bred in the same tradition, his means were ample and his indolence self-imposed. He had served his Government conspicuously in India for thirty-one years, as administrator, linguist, trusted emissary, retiring with almost every honour only to be imprisoned by the ineptitude of London Club life. Once his heart was won his head worked untiringly for Toc H and its purposes, and in the eight months before his death (he died in March 1928) he established the Toc H Overseas System of Commendation, especially in regard to junior members going to India and the East. Toc H, as an organisation, was not concerned with the mechanics of emigration, but it was, and is, vitally concerned in preventing casualties in conduct and character among young men who, torn from familiar surroundings and influences, are often bewildered with loneliness in distant parts of the earth. Today a lad arriving in any part of the English-speaking world who has notified Toc H of his existence, will be met by friends, housed, entertained, and shown "the ropes" before he gets down to work; and however far away his job may take him, in town or "bush," Toc H will keep in touch.

The system operates smoothly on its own level, and it does so because it was devised by Ludo who strolled casually into All

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Hallows one Sunday afternoon to win a bet. "We shall not gaze on his like again," said Tubby, and it is true.

Is it in any way extraordinary that a man who founded a Movement inspired by friendship should have friends himself whom he loved? It might have been said of him what he wrote in the front of his book *The Smoking Furnace* in tribute to Herbert Fleming: "He not only loved men, but liked them." It was the key to Tubby's ministry, the great central theme of all his striving to which All Hallows, Toc H, and the rest were, in the last analysis, just necessary incidentals. And it is summed up in his own words: "To worship ancient nets will never mend them; to trawl the shallows of our present pews will break our hearts in vain. Launch out. Find more men friends. Listen to what they say."

CHAPTER XIII

THE Vicar of All Hallows, Berkyngeschirche, is probably the only clergyman in the Church of England to have the world assigned as his parish. By the terms of the All Hallows Toc H Trust of 1928—formed under a joint deed of Dr. Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Corporation of Toc H—his obligation to overseas units was clearly emphasised and, henceforth, members of Toc H and the Women's Association, wherever they might be, could look to the church on Tower Hill as their spiritual home. This global vision derived reality from Tubby's systematic visits to all parts of the world, and in the All Hallows records names like Rotorua, Kuala Lumpur, Chilliwack, B.C., Rosario and Valparaiso occur almost as regularly as Eastcheap, Seething Lane and Trinity Square. Climbing the stairs of a big London firm to talk to employees differed, in Tubby's opinion, only externally from climbing 10,000 feet in the Trans-Andine Railway in search of Toc H'ers in Chile—the Londoner and the Anglo-Chilean, or whoever it might be, were fundamentally similar in their human craving for sympathetic companionship. And as Toc H claimed to unite men in a fellowship transcending time and space it was not surprising that appeals to meet "the Padre" should reach Byward Street from all over the globe.

The South American Tour of 1928 was a partial fulfilment of this claim. It conformed, directly, with the principle laid down in the Trust, but, indirectly, it was expected to provide a much needed rest for Tubby whose health was beginning to worry his friends. His non-stop routine, scarcely interrupted over the years except for illness, was exacting its toll: wise heads came together and it was realised that, while complete inactivity would be to him intolerable, some work in entirely new surroundings and the enforced idleness of a long sea voyage might fully restore him.

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His friends, some of them at least, understood him as well as he thought he understood them and they knew that his spirit was never more unfettered and exultant than when at sea. "With me," he would often say, "the sea is worship," and he would half-humorously justify his preference for the sea over the land by quoting from the Venite: "The Sea is His and He made it; but His hands *merely* prepared the dry land." Sending him on a sea journey to any part of the world, was intelligent therapy of a high order.

By May 1928 he had so far mastered his "nerves" and the qualms of leaving All Hallows at a particularly busy time that he could write to Jack Richardson and Stanley Clapham, who were to accompany him on the trip, with something like his old enthusiasm and respect for detail. At least, the usual nightmare—trunks, literature, posters, slides, etc.—of successive aides through the years is resurrected, and breezily consigned to their care.

They sailed on the S.S. *Almanzora* from Southampton on June 15th, with a typical Toc H "send-off" ringing in their ears. Each had been given by the Company a comfortable two-berth cabin to himself, situated close together. It had been agreed that a diary should be kept and, when only two days out, these ominous lines were entered by Clapham: "We are already finding it difficult to keep Tubby from working. He is constantly planning new themes, and erupting new ideas." After much persuasion a compromise was effected and Tubby agreed, rather rebelliously, to confine his resurgent energy to writing, in poetic form, "A History of the Church of England"! The "Keepers" wearily consented.

At Rio de Janeiro, where Nature had vied with human imagination to produce a Latin jewel and life is as artificial as a Hollywood set, it seemed highly improbable that anything resembling a Toc H group could exist. And yet, scarcely had the *Almanzora* entered the necklace of dancing lights than a R.M.S.P. launch drew alongside and two Toc H'ers scrambled aboard with the news that they had been waiting two hours in the launch, and the rest of the fellows were waiting at the Central Club with the British Ambassador, Sir Beilby Alston. It was almost midnight when

they got ashore, but they were instantly whisked to the Central Club where the Group was still awaiting them with the Ambassador and the Archdeacon of Rio. Tubby opened up the talk in his usual fine way, touching, with rare insight, upon the problems of their isolation in an alien land, and the inescapable need of imaginative leadership. It was well into the early hours of Sunday morning when Tubby and Co. returned to the ship.

Sunday was an anxious day for Richardson and Clapham. They watched Tubby, oblivious to warnings, gathering momentum and shooting full speed ahead. He took the early celebration at the English Church, preached at Matins, had luncheon with the Ambassador, addressed a large group of people on the significance of Toc H in the international setting and, instead of being exhausted, discussed with great good humour the relative merits of Sydney Harbour and Rio (giving the palm to Rio) as they leaned across the rail of the departing *Almanzora* and watched a pale golden mist caress the mountain tops, and the lights of Rio begin to wink saucily across the hyaline surface of the water.

Buenos Aires rather suffered by comparison. Sprawled on the banks of the Plata without the benefit of natural beauty it lacked the physical attractions of Rio, and also its sparkle, and temperamental resilience.

They were housed in the Mark, a graceful building after the Spanish style situated in Chacabuco, one of the noisiest streets in the city: but the Chapel on the roof was a dream even if the rest of the House lacked the homelike atmosphere of a typical English Mark. The situation as they found it in Buenos Aires was not encouraging. The Movement lacked constructive leadership although some first-class men—Sir Hilary Leng, Canon Brady, Ralph Jackson—were connected with it: their talents, however, were largely involved elsewhere. The British Ambassador, described in the diary as “a very good and able representative of the Crown,” was only tepidly interested in Toc H. To him it was just another of the many societies within his official ken, and, he inferred diplomatically, he did not intend to be bothered with it, other than to use it in a “gentlemanly” way. Whether his attitude was in any way modified after hearing Tubby at the first Council

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meeting is questionable, but certainly the rest of them were on their toes. To some of them that night, accustomed to thinking of Toc H as just a "different kind" of social club, there came a sense of Christian purpose, a new awareness of the tremendous weight of responsibility that rested upon them.

During the weeks in Buenos Aires they worked hard to develop their personal contacts, realising that once Tubby's push and drive were removed the future of the Movement would depend solely on the quality of the men left behind. Richardson, for instance, had the good fortune to know Mallett, a fellow Wykehamist, who was influential in the Chamber of Commerce; he forthwith arranged a meeting which brought together some of the most substantial citizens in the place. Not all caught on immediately. One rather tired Cambridge man, looking for variation, thought it a "topping idea" and supposed it would be an excellent place for cocktails and bridge before dinner. Richardson sat on him tactfully, but heavily. Tubby, too, after an early Celebration, preached to a huge congregation in the Scotch Presbyterian Church, and widened considerably the scope of his appeal. But his presence in a church other than his own raised the important issue of inter-communion that had been agitating the minds of many of the English-speaking residents in South America.

Briefly, P.B.C. believed that the cardinal issue of our times was not whether a man belonged to this or that expression of religion, however valid its individual claims, but whether people *believed in God at all*. Himself he described, a little indeterminately perhaps, as a Laudian Protestant, but the inflexibility of his belief in the Sacrament could never be doubted. It was the certainty of his own belief that gave him his charitable assurance in dealing either with Rome on the one hand or "Chapel" on the other. They were not enemies at the gate, he would say, but men united in a common cause: whatever the differences of practice or tradition they could at least meet on the ground of devotion to our Lord. This catholicity of outlook provoked the sneers of a few millinery-minded Anglicans: "All Hallows," they would say. "Oh, yes, I know, the place where they have perpetual reservation of the Prince of Wales," but they failed to grasp that for Tubby devotion to the central Action of our faith must lead

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to action. He once said that men should go out from their Communion itching to work for our Lord, as "a child when his nails have been cut, itches to rub his fingers in the earth." And as his work encompassed the world, so too did his interest in men, whatever the claims of their denominations. To know of his ministrations to an injured lad whom a straight-laced Anglican priest refused to communicate because he had not been confirmed, to read his correspondence with a Roman Catholic friend in Australia, or to guess at the depths of his friendship with a certain Scots Presbyterian minister, was to know that his love for our Lord was so wide and deep that sectarian barriers melted in its wake. He was therefore able to speak to the South Americans from a Catholic, not a sectarian, point of view and mollify the feelings of several, including some non-conformist clergy, who were ready to accuse Toc H, or any movement originating in Britain, of "Anglican exclusiveness." This question was to be raised on other occasions, but not always settled quite so easily.

From Buenos Aires quick trips were made to Montevideo, Bahia Blanca, Rosario, Santa Fe, Mendoza, and other places where the local Toc H Groups varied in size and enthusiasm. The Mendoza Group, a tough bunch, was a distinct shock to Tubby. They had no idea of what Toc H really stood for and the Secretary had the temerity to insinuate that Toc H had established itself in the community under false colours. Tubby made short shrift of him, and in a biting speech told them exactly what he thought of them; it was not flattering. And when he had them wriggling in their seats, he veered quickly to the positive side and told them what Toc H really meant. The measure of his effectiveness may be gauged from the fact that before the evening was out several of the more decent members present had come forward and offered to reform a new Group, saying that for the first time they had a glimmer of the meaning of Toc H.

The trouble with the Movement in South America was, that lacking any strong leadership, it tended to degenerate into just another social club whose central attraction was a dinner once a month, and the reorganisation of the Movement was one of the really

difficult tasks of Tubby's career. It was all so different, in a way, from what they had expected, and Clapham and Richardson grew anxious over Tubby's health. They had only to be away for a few hours to find that he had organised a meeting or gathered a group of people, sometimes Spanish-speaking, sometimes British residents, with whom he was discussing projects that would involve enormous effort. Richardson partly solved the problem by presenting him with a set of golf clubs that would, at least, keep him in the open air for a good part of the time. He showed an unexpected talent for the game—which he had never played—although, now and then, his nerves would get the better of him; on one occasion, having missed the ball a couple of times, he hurled the club to the ground in a sudden fury and roared: "What are we doing here wasting our time on this infernal game? We should be about the Lord's work." And off he marched. When they met for dinner, however, he was in his jolliest mood and made no reference to the incident.

They crossed the Andes—"a series of incredible visions"—and slid into Los Andes fourteen hours after leaving Mendoza. Lambert and Russell, friends of Richardson who awaited them on the station, accompanied them to Valparaiso and the entry in the diary reads: "We had a fine reception at the station of twenty, or more people. The inevitable flash-light photo and attendant reporter. Bob was very good, and carefully drew the latter away from Tubby." The five days in Valparaiso left a most happy farewell impression of the visit to South America. The weekly English paper produced a Toc H number, the local group, small but vigorous, initiated six new members, and at the end of a bang-up evening attended by over sixty guests, including the British Minister, they farewelled the departing visitors with the singing of "Rogerum." They sailed on the S.S. *Orduna* for Portugal on August 18, 1928, convinced that Toc H, Chile, would go forward and that the Movement in South America had its future before it. One of the last entries in the diary sums it up simply: "As regards Toc H South America—Tubby's visit undoubtedly made all the difference to them. They badly needed someone from H.Q., as most of them had never seen Toc H at work outside South America. Now they will go on from strength to strength.

They are a fine lot of men, and Ralph Jackson is steadily doing marvels in showing the true spiritual side of Toc H."

* * *

Three weeks were spent in Cintra, Portugal, as the guests of Mr. and Mrs. Godfrey Pope, whose families had long been associated with the country in various ways. The house, a charming miniature tucked in the hills beneath the shadow of an ancient Moorish castle, commanded an incomparable view of the valley sweeping away to the sea on one side and a wide plain fringed with mountains on the other. The air was like champagne and, after the cloying humidity of the tropics, a veritable tonic. By the time they reached England Tubby was very much more himself and itching to be back on the job.

Tubby's first duty whenever he returned from distant parts was to visit Beaulieu, a duty which followed an invariable pattern. Whatever the hour, morning or night, he would make his way to the Abbey: sometimes, when the gate was shut, he would climb the wall of the churchyard and walk over to a little window in the north side of the chancel through which could be seen the guardian flame of Love incarnate. There in the Presence he would kneel and give thanks while the driver of the taxi looked solemnly over the wall. Fortified, he would go down to the village and burst in upon the grocer whose loud and delighted greeting usually brought others to the spot and for some minutes the village was in an uproar: then came the urgent question as to what succulent home-coming gift could be recommended for him to take to his dog—for he was seldom without one. Perhaps sausages were decided upon and vast quantities of the delicacy, together with an enormous pot of jam, would be loaded into the waiting taxi.

The next stop was always the Rectory. The Abbot would come forth, often from the middle of a meal, and Tubby would kneel and kiss his hand: raising him to his feet the Abbot embraced him—truly two men transfigured by love, the spiritual father and his child in God. Finally, Little Hatchett, and as many members of the Clayton family as could assemble, were there to greet him joyously. After the common meal together came the Family Prayers, conducted by old Mr. Clayton when he was alive, with

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the animals of the household, numerous and obedient, sitting around and imposing a rare Franciscan atmosphere. Strangers who happened to be present were always startled to hear Tubby's dog give an audible grunt at the end of each prayer.

He was devoted to his family, which included nieces and nephews, but there is no doubt that after the deaths of his mother and father his homecomings from his overseas tours lost much of their character. He had, it is true, deliberately surrendered the enjoyment of a family circle for the cause, and the cost of that detachment could be measured by the intensity of his sympathy with those who enjoyed such privileges to the full. But this very detachment intensified, almost disproportionately, his joy in the occasional reunion, and each new departure from the family ranks, whether through death or distant duty, was keenly felt. His passion for dogs, held since boyhood, became, in a sense, a defence mechanism against this sort of thing, and as the years advanced he talked about his dogs as a man might talk about his children.

There was a succession of these faithful friends through the years—Hephzi-Bah and her bull terrier friend who died by an angry butcher's knife in Brighton, Kemmel who became the regimental dog at Knutsford and sampled the Marks when they began to thrive, Smuts who, among various accomplishments (he was the master of fifteen tricks), could play the opening three notes of Rachmaninoff's *Prelude* and who died in the Blitz, Billy, a golden cocker spaniel given by Queen Mary, won many friends for Toc H before he died of a broken back on a fast highway, and a Cairn, Chippie, from the same illustrious donor, who reigns at the present time. Wherever his travels took him there was usually one of them to welcome him home, and he never hesitated to proclaim the superiority of the dog over all living animals, and even man at times. His loyalty to a dog could be carried to inexplicable lengths. On one occasion William Temple invited him to Bishopthorpe to spend a few days. Tubby accepted, providing he could bring his dog: the Archbishop refused, and Tubby immediately sent word declining the invitation. A wire came back from York: "Bring the dog. Confound you."

Back in London he was caught once more in the whirl of

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affairs. Dick Sheppard, who knew the Whitehall crowd well, was doing wonders in Central London and bringing, in some degree, the Church closer to the State; but he knew nothing of industry. It remained for Tubby, through the medium of Toc H and from the pulpit of All Hallows, to remind this important branch of British life "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." His analogy of the Church of England in the business world was disturbing—a goldfish in a jar placed in a marble bank with the surprised executives asking: "What is it *doing* in our Bank?" They had to be taught that the fish was not merely ornamental, it was also the historic symbol of our Blessed Lord.

Industry, through the rich men who control it, must be recaptured by the Church—that was his most pointed theme. Men who had devoted their lives to making money were debarred in a special way from appreciating the things of the spirit; yet time and again Tubby discovered, behind the self-sufficiency, a dissatisfaction and a longing for something on a different plane of existence. He would work for months, and even years, to bring a business man into the Church and, in so doing, he would frequently secure the sympathy and support of a great industry too; there was scarcely a famous figure in Imperial Industry who was not personally known to him—even the sinister Sir Basil Zaharoff—and men like Cadman, Bain, Wakefield, and Hambro were among his most intimate friends. Through them Toc H carried its Christian gospel along a score of channels that threaded their ways across the world.

Not only were men of stature, and others too, influenced through his personality, but also through his writings, both in the daily press and in books. His affiliation with *The Times* came from his friendship at St. Paul's with Charles Brodribb, the Literary Editor, who has been one of the first to teach him "the music of language." It was Brodribb who insisted, whatever the pressure of Tubby's work, that he continue his writing, and the surprising thing is that he did although the quantity was more meagre than might otherwise have been the case. He was quite boyishly proud of his connections with journalism, as well he might be seeing that he and the late Dr. Taylor, Vicar of St. Bride's,

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Fleet Street, were the only clerical members of the London Press Club in England. Some of his happiest evenings were spent in dining at the Club, and his indulgence in night work was possibly a token of his fellow feeling with professional journalists. Fleet Street at night, humming with activity—its offices and restaurants aglow with lights and conversation—never ceased to charm him, and his irregular appearances in print strengthened the relationship with this bohemian world. And he had the talents that made for success on the Street . . . the gift of phrase, a flair for dramatic presentation, and, above all, the intuitive eye for the value of an article or photograph appearing in the press: messengers were dispatched immediately, hard-worked typists jostled and worried; a "thousand of this" were ordered by midnight, a couple of hundred copies of something else to be delivered to a great business concern by special messenger in the morning. By such means many a magnate was won to the Cause, and British industry made aware of the Church's existence.

His casual writings, done mostly after midnight or on train journeys, appeared in papers like *The Times*, the *Spectator*, the *Week-end Review*, etc., and touched upon everything from the Colour Question to Dull Sermons, but, at cleverly timed intervals, a pregnant suggestion fell from his pen that caught the eye of a business man or secured the support of some wealthy reader. In 1932 a selection of these articles was published in a delightful volume called *Earthquake Love*—the title taken from the resolution of a group of men, who, standing on the ruins of San Francisco after the great Earthquake, planned a new city worthy of St. Francis. Two years previously *Plain Tales from Flanders* had appeared. In many ways it was his most typical book, revealing him in moods that were mystical, grim and jocund by turn. Obviously the work of a first-class scholar and poet who had the "popular touch." The book was well received by critics and public alike: the one regret of his friends, having read it, was that the exactions of his work prevented a steady literary output.

His success in enlisting the interest and support of industry was not secured at the expense of All Hallows or his Toc H commitments. There was the rub. The strain of the growing

burden of these different responsibilities was ageing him prematurely and further undermining his health on which he could no longer place firm reliance. Yet there was no immediate escape from the strain. In 1928 we have him appealing for the creation of a great Endowment Fund to sustain the work of Toc H throughout the world. In a long Message to the Whole Family he wrote:

There have been manifold warnings in the last few years that the Foundation Membership—and the first body of leaders in Toc H was mainly drawn from them—have not an indefinite number of years before them. Death has already thinned their ranks. And while the younger men are carrying the torch magnificently at home and overseas, they cannot fulfil the work and raise the great sums necessary to make it permanent. . . . Our hope is that whereas so much has hitherto been given by those for whom the War can never be over, this year may see some signal act of thanksgiving on the part of those who came back from it unharmed in many dangers, or welcomed home ten years ago a family unbroken. I call to mind a pregnant story told me by a Foundation Member (it was John Hollis) minus an arm, who, when helping a Disabled Centre, interviewed an Alderman, thus:

The Alderman, generously:

“Here’s fifty pounds.”

The Foundation Member, inquiringly:

“You had two sons in the war, sir, had you not?”

The Alderman, piously: “Yes, indeed, and thank God they both came home.”

The Foundation Member, pluckily: “I see, sir, you value your sons at twenty-five pounds apiece.”

The Alderman: “Give me back that cheque.”

The result, £2,000 for disabled men . . . I must further beg, by the right of brotherhood, to be forgiven a tiny personal point. All these nine years, year in, year out, the main strain upon me has been raising money. This was never easy, and today, with immense development of Toc H, it has become quite an unendurable strain, both on my own health and on the comparatively small group of men and women who have

come again and again to the rescue. . . . Marvellous as the response has been, it is this chronic anxiety which has aged me and held me from my proper work among you, to which I now claim the right of returning as fully as I may. For the next few months the nightmare must continue, and the strain ahead is terrible. But after that, if God so wills, we shall by an effort as unanimous as the vote of your elected Executive have achieved the object immediately before us. . . . The struggle of the next few months is thus in no sense selfish. If we succeed, we shall henceforth be able to leave the field of charity for our own society finally and for our lifetime. Henceforth we shall only need to work for all the other causes which we have at heart, to many of which Toc H itself has led us.

The problems of Toc H finance were concomitant with those of All Hallows itself. The church for years had been proved to be perilously shaken by the proximity of the Metropolitan Railway, which passes under Byward Street a few yards from the north wall of the church: the cost of reinforcing the ancient fabric was tremendous but the worry and expense were partly compensated for by the fact that the excavations not only discovered a Roman pavement, a Roman building, and many Roman relics, but made it possible to insert a handsome Undercroft of reinforced concrete among the Roman ruins. Directly beneath the chancel of All Hallows was constructed an exquisite memorial Chapel, designed to be the sacred depository of the Ashes of parishioners and members of Toc H; in commending it Tubby wrote:

“Their caskets rest above the bones of thousands of parishioners, age after age interred beneath the ‘quiet marble,’ as it was called when the martyred Laud was laid here to rest. The first dear Ashes of the Toc H Family are those of ‘Ludo’ Porter (Sir Charles Ludovic Porter, first Overseas Commissioner of Toc H). Here also rests the urn of Trevelyan Thomson, Foundation Member in the House of Commons; and that of Sister Rose Stapleton, R.R.C., also Foundation Member. Since these, have come the Ashes of a Mother, those of a Wife, those of a younger member—all typical

examples of the way in which this sacred place is now regarded. The generations pass. Workers win home. The souls of servants enter on their reward. Within a century, this noble Undercroft, its dignity well known and highly honoured, will be a place of loving, widespread pilgrimage."

It survived that dreadful night in '41, when the church was destroyed by enemy action, and became the final sanctuary of the Ashes of James Emerson, a Scout of the Lord Mayor's Own (the Scout Troop attached to All Hallows) who perished in an adjoining building the same night.

And so it went on, the exactions and the compensations, the strain and the exhilaration, calling forth magnificent efforts of mind and body but steadily sapping his vitality. By 1930 he was ordered a complete rest and change of climate. He got himself appointed to the Church of England Chaplaincy on the island of Capri over late Lent and Easter and accompanied by Peter Murray-Hill and Arthur Richardson, the brother of Jack, he sailed on May 16, 1930, on an Anglo-Persian oil tanker. Jock Gillespie joined them later and Tubby, with guide book in hand, wandered over the island giving them a course in ancient history which, if not always as factual as Grote, was alive with anecdotes and preposterous theories. Having moved to the annex of the hotel where they were staying he had a table and two candlesticks placed on the balcony and there each evening, beneath a velvet Italian sky, prayers were said: both Peter and Arthur, who were made to read the lessons, were obviously moved by such simple yet dramatic piety. He was in his element, caught by the beauty and spirit of the place, delving in all sorts of obscure places and getting to know the English colony which returned the courtesy by thronging the little whitewashed chapel with its marble altar. During Holy Week he was very busy and, despite the attempts of the others to dissuade him, took the Three Hours Service on Good Friday in which he drew a marvellous historical picture with Jesus and Tiberius, the forces of Good and Evil, standing at the centre.

He returned to England, refreshed admittedly, but, to use his own words, "still a creeping thing." The Executive, supported by the doctors, ordered him away for the entire summer, and a

friend suggested his historic home in the Orkneys. The house was called "Graemeshall," and from it the Graemes had dominated the isles for centuries. From it too the great Montrose had sailed to meet his doom, and the Graemes, of which he was one, offered resistance to Scottish arrogance. But those days are gone. The streams of enterprise have moved away and "Graemeshall" today offers only seclusion to the visitor, and the prospect of health in the clean Orcadian air. It suited Tubby admirably because, whether he liked it or not, there was very little he could do except study the history of the place and get to know the local people. His affection increased with his knowledge and his two months in the isles was long enough to make him the welcome guest in hundreds of homes.

His health rapidly improved and towards the end of his stay we find him writing a Message to the Toc H Staff Conference, at which he could not be present, full of wit and vim. He returned to London "itching to get back to work." The streets of Tower Hill once more beheld the familiar figure in indifferent clothes, usually accompanied by the tail-wagging Smuts, hurrying on errands whose significance often spanned the seven seas. There was much coming and going on the Hill, and again a light that burned almost perpetually through the hours of darkness. The constant office visiting culminated in a great mission, "The Work of Courage," which provided a pattern for both concentrating and stimulating the Church's work within a large commercial or industrial area. It was a thrilling week, conducted by Timothy Rees, later Bishop of Llandaff, in which services were held in warehouses, factories and wharves, in the open air and in pubs; visiting for "The Work of Courage" began in the small hours of the morning by talking to the fishporters of Billingsgate and seldom finished among the City business men until late at night, because frequently discussion groups of all kinds were held in the offices after hours. The influence of the mission has never really died down, and an odd tribute to its fame is to be found in the fact that when Tubby was travelling some months later in the Middle East he came across a pamphlet describing it in an obscure Arab village. Someone had passed that way. . . .

Shortly after the mission Sir John Cadman, head of Anglo-

Persian Oil, invited Tubby to inspect the work of Toc H among the Company units in Persia and the Middle East generally. Arrangements were made that he, and his companions, should travel out mostly by air and return by tanker from Suez, the whole tour taking something like six or seven weeks. He left Croydon, with Stanley Clapham and Harry Chappell, on December 19, 1931, and flew to Paris where they were met by Jean Besançon, a French Toc H'er, and entertained by the Paris Group at the Hotel Chatham; from Paris they travelled by train to Brindisi, joining the Company's seaplane *Scipio* which took them over the Isles of Greece to Galilee. He recorded his impressions in a phantasy called *A Magic Persian Carpet* and, although an inveterate sea lover, never once betrayed a preference for the sea over the air, except by indirection: "An ocular dyspepsia possesses any person who wakes in Brindisi, lunches off Athens, and looks to land somewhere off Asia Minor. Even Smith Major would resent this rapid over-riding of the classics." They came to rest on Lake Tiberias, stayed the night, and in the pre-dawn darkness boarded a landplane, *Hamilcar* by name, which quickly climbed above the dark smudge of the hills and winged its way out over the great Syrian Desert towards Bagdad.

They alighted for lunch at Rutbah Wells, a foursquare fort standing neatly in a universal vacancy: the intention, of course, was to refresh themselves and then make their way to Bagdad whence a Company aeroplane would carry them to Abadan for Christmas Day. But an unexpected hitch upset their plans. The *Hamilcar* had deranged its self-starting gear in the process of landing and, as the giant airscrews could not be swung by hand, this meant two hours tinkering at least. Christmas Eve would have to be spent in Rutbah Wells. Not a pleasant prospect.

Six of them sat down to dinner—Tubby, Clapham, Chappell, and an American Missionary and his wife and baby daughter who had joined them at Tiberias. As they were finishing, news came from the Fort gate that a Dutch plane, en route to Java with three men, had come down beside the *Hamilcar*: no sooner had they joined the table, than a further commotion announced more arrivals. The *Nairn*, an enormous charabanc that raced weekly across the six hundred miles of desert, had drawn into

Rutbah Wells with a number of passengers, including a party of German men and women. A few minutes later a R.A.F. midget swooped down and two giants, a pilot and aircraftsman, strolled into the overcrowded messroom. Each small party, quite irrelevant, had drawn apart for drinks and conversation; and yet this was the season of universal brotherhood. Rather desperately, Tubby, never very musical, began to hum a tune which Harry Chappell dimly recognised as "While Shepherds Watched"; he caught it, and lifted it to a manageable key. Conversation gradually dropped, chairs were drawn up and soon the whole group were singing Christmas tunes, led by the Germans. "Most were unknown to us," wrote Tubby, "but one or two were common to us all. We sang the words in many languages, the British diffidently, the Germans with a well trained harmony. For more than half an hour, the spell of this discovery held all of us, the self-willed children of a common Christendom. Then we sang 'Adeste, Fideles' finally, and sought a few hours sleep. We went out into a night of liquid blue, dazzled by one lone star which hung like a lit lamp. From the top of the walls of the fort, we looked out silently, towards the East and back to Bethlehem. A few hours later, long before day, some of us met again, and broke the Bread of Peace and Immortality. For the first time since the War, I had the joy of ministering to Germans."

They reached Abadan on Christmas afternoon, in time for the Evening Service, and a late night. From there visits were made to Teheran, Ahwaz, Haft Kel, Mohammerah, Basrah, and Masjid-i-Suliman, usually known as "Fields," the old main oilfield from where the pipelines run down for about one hundred and forty miles to Abadan. At Abadan they were shown over the Refinery—a complicated mass of pipes, coolers, cleaners, furnaces, and roller railways. A special display by the fire brigade, manned solely by Persians, was put on for Tubby's benefit. In his best Pickwickian mood, he radiated joy and delight, as he watched them rush from the station, light a fire in a good-sized tank half full of oil, don gas masks, and prepare to rescue one of their comrades. Only one hitch occurred; they had failed to connect the pumps, and the fire was out when they got to it. Tubby pronounced it a most successful afternoon.

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Cairo and Alexandria were visited, with gatherings of the local Toc H Groups, on the way to Suez where they—Tubby and Chappell, Stanley Clapham having gone on to Bombay to the Mission to Seamen—joined the homeward bound tanker, *British Princess*. The Founder-Padre immediately divested himself of most of his clothes and, armed with games and books, tucked himself away in a corner aft, where he was always to be found. Each evening most of the ship's company gathered in the fo'c'sle and Tubby held the floor—a memorable experience for many of the men whose lives are among the most lonely and isolated on earth. Owing to the dangerous nature of their cargo they were hurried in and out of harbour and often kept remote from the facilities provided in freighter ports; many of the men, then, seldom saw their families. On reaching England Tubby pleaded passionately for their cause in an article in *The Times*, and untiringly through the years he has used every means and stratagem to alleviate their lot. Every man that sails a tanker knows, at least, where to find one friend.

It was a jolly crew aboard the *British Princess* on that particular trip, which lasted nearly three weeks. Everyone agreed that P.B.C.'s cheerfulness flooded the ship, and monotony vanished; morale, said the Captain, had never been as high, and there was not a man, from the cabin boy to senior officers, who did not look forward eagerly to the evening gatherings with the Padre in the chair. Five candidates for Confirmation came forward, including the Captain in whose cabin the classes were held; the men, highly expert technically, were not only extremely intelligent but eager to appraise Christianity by studying sources they had not previously investigated. A week out from England a wireless message was sent to the Bishop of Bristol, the first port of entry being Avonmouth. "Thence we went up in a rejoicing body, to the private chapel of the Bishop's Palace, where baptism and confirmation were ministered to those who had decided to come forward."

CHAPTER XIV

IN 1932 Tubby had found his own way to West Africa, the purpose being to report on junior members of the United Africa Company for certain friends on the directorate among whom was Lord Leverhulme, who had been a staunch supporter of Toc H in Lancashire. These youngsters, working up-country and isolated, were often confronted with private problems which Toc H was competent to study and, wherever necessary, offer remedial suggestions: the report was to be partly verbal, and partly on paper.

He was staying with the Colonel commanding the battalion then stationed a short distance from the walls of Kano when he met the District Medical Officer who suggested, during the course of conversation, that Tubby go with him on his first official inspection of the section of ground immediately outside the south-east gate, where lepers were compelled to spend the night. Next afternoon they set out jauntily in the doctor's small car, the parson's antiquarian instinct being uppermost since Kano, a Mohammedan Protectorate, was reputed to be very ancient and still completely surrounded by the original mud walls; the approach to the city was impressive but, very shortly, the interest of the traveller was replaced by utter revulsion. A fetid stench corrupted everything near the leper colony and when they stepped inside its awful confines they were almost overwhelmed with nausea. They saw before them a nightmare of human suffering and degradation. All around, crouched in every inch of shade or sprawled full length in some hopeless corner, were hideous caricatures of human beings—some without limbs, others a mass of decaying flesh, many blind; there were men and women, and enfeebled children, too, clutching at the breasts of demented mothers. In the middle of the confine, like the witches in *Macbeth*, others stirred their evening meal beneath the menace of the African

sun, and the wails and groans of the sufferers rose like a gruesome cacophony from hell.

The interpreters, schooled to indifference by the Koran which teaches that leprosy is a reproach for sin, garrulously, and almost happily, supplied the facts. Every Friday, after the dismissal of the morning congregation from the Mosque the worshippers toss the lepers any tiny coins they happen to possess, for Mohammed teaches that alms may be given to the sufferers, but not healing; with such stray pittance they purchase, through those in nominal control and free of leprosy, the miserable sustenance that keeps them alive. Each night was one of terror. The bad men of the city prowled round the slave walls and the lepers could expect frequent and violent invasion of their wretchedness; they were robbed, beaten, and sometimes done to death, the assailants departing only with the dawning of day. Both Tubby and the doctor returned from their first glimpse of an old-fashioned leper settlement shivering with indignation, determined to call the attention to that which they had seen with their own eyes.

"From that time onward," he recorded, "leprosy became a nightmare in my mind without redress. I did not know that there was any means of a curative kind available. Wherever I then went I thought it right to ask to see such leper colonies as might lie on my route or near my route. I had the joy of finding at Zaria a colony so utterly in contrast with that outside the old slave walls of Kano that I could scarce give credence to my eyes. Here there was calm and order found prevailing; respect for patients, treatment to be had, cleanliness reinforced by explanation, as part and parcel of the whole ideal. This colony belonged to the Church Missionary Society, and while it was not then what it became later, replete with confidence and every modern treatment, it was the very best that could be done under the latest knowledge then prevailing. . . . In contrast to the cruelty of Kismet, here was the God of Love in operation touching in tenderness these hideous sores, and lending sanctity to the whole scene."

But his education was not complete. Turning towards the coast again he happened on a further frightfulness that seared his very soul after the calm of Zaria. It was in a British Government Collecting Station for lepers he had gone out of his way to visit.

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Two lepers, their disfigured faces contorted with hate, went fighting mad against each other beneath the blazing noonday sun. They tore, kicked, and scratched each other in a delirious fury, screaming with pain and hate; a native non-commissioned officer parted them at last on the very ground, but the moment he stepped back they crawled together and fought again.

Colonel Rowe promptly took Tubby to a highly placed officer in the Department of Public Health to whom he related what he had seen. The official listened politely but firmly deprecated the proposal to call the attention of the Colonial Office to the matter. Tubby was indignant, but fearful lest he should involve the District Medical Officer who should not have shared his official inspection, even with a parson. His fears were justified. The doctor was reprimanded and transferred; he finally decided to send in his resignation but the cause for which he suffered was much advanced, as events were to prove, by his action at Kano.

Tubby's conscience was thoroughly aroused, and it was fortunate that aboard the ship by which he left Lagos on his return home was none other than Dr. Macdonald of the famed Itu Colony from whom he learned a great deal about the history and means of dealing with the scourge. Until 1871, when the germ was first isolated, no less authority than the Royal College of Physicians of London declared that leprosy was hereditary, and cure was unknown. But centuries ago a rumour reached Europe that the Indians and Chinese had a mysterious tree, the chalmoogra, whose seeds yielded an oil which, with some victims, kept the disease in check. Yet the benefits were limited because, being taken orally, it produced such nausea that most people were unable to retain it. Could the vital extract be administered by injection? That was the problem to which Sir Leonard Rogers of the Indian Medical Service addressed himself in the second decade of this century; in 1915 the first injection was given with encouraging results. Thenceforward, the treatment, modified by Dr. Muir and certain American doctors, became increasingly available to sufferers. Chalmoogra has now been superseded by even more efficacious sulphur drugs and it is not unduly optimistic to say that, if taken early, the disease is now permanently curable. Dr. Macdonald showed him records, and among them three

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remarkable letters from three patients who had left Itu for their own homes—"each of these letters," Tubby has written, "read like a lost page of the New Testament. Each man ascribed to Our Lord's healing hands his liberation from the living death of severe leprosy, and pledged that at no time in life would he forget the Divine origin of the care and skill so patiently bestowed upon his treatment."

The facts, thanks to Dr. Macdonald, were in his mind, and the experience of the actual horrors of leprosy burned into his heart. Reaching London he went on his first night to a meeting of Toc H in Stepney and rose and spoke concerning leprosy. He asked for volunteers who would, if health were sound, and after training, undertake to serve for five years at Itu, and then, if called, try to found new leper colonies on a Christian pattern. Six men stood up that first night, and within six months Toc H had presented the British Empire Leprosy Relief Association with twenty-five thousand pounds in cash, and fifty names of volunteers. Even more significantly, the Toc H Group in the House of Commons, which included three Leprosy Volunteers, waited on the Cabinet Minister responsible for the Colonial Office—with some strange though highly beneficial results. When he attended his first Annual Meeting of the B.E.L.R.A. there were less than twenty present, mostly doctors, and one of the motions that had to be faced was the dismissal of the solitary paid Secretary, through lack of sufficient funds; but at that moment the tide was turning and within a few months had raced with such power through the channel of Toc H that the greatest in the land were thronging the public platforms and speaking to thousands, and the Movement itself went on to raise over £100,000, together with a flow of volunteers well-nigh sufficient for the proper staffing of colonies and outposts as required. The action of the Medical Officer at Kano, reprimanded by his superiors, in taking the Founder-Padre of Toc H with him on an official tour of inspection had been justified.

The year 1932 was momentous for another reason. It was the year in which Sir Howard Button, the succeeding Alderman, gave Lord Wakefield the long-awaited leave to help Tower Hill, and the Improvement Scheme, under his chairmanship, began operations.

In "A Deed of Trust" drawn up in 1929 Charlotte Tetley presented to All Hallows and Toc H a splendid old house, soon to be famed as "Forty Two." It stood in Trinity Square, huge, capacious, inconvenient, but when the workmen had finished "renovating" and "adding" there was no more homely residence in town. The old portion served both as the Vicarage of All Hallows and the Headquarters of Toc H Overseas Commissioners; the new housed a Canteen, Club Room, Sandwich Den, Skittle Alley, and other social amenities which quickly attracted nearly seventy thousand Londoners a year, who might otherwise have been very lonely and unhappy in the great city. In November 1938 Number 6, The Crescent, was completed and became part of "Forty Two," being joined by a short passageway. It contained apartments for the Church Staff and single rooms for the more permanent visitors: in the basement could be seen a fine section of the Wall of London, built about A.D. 120, and only disclosed in the later part of 1937. Altogether, "Forty Two," and its adjacent buildings, formed a unique "private home" for the Toc H colony on the Hill.

Gradually but compellingly the Scheme moved forward. Buildings were acquired, others collapsed before the demolition squads (and later Hitler's bombs!) and it became apparent even to those who had regarded the whole thing as "a pleasant dream" that the Restoration of Tower Hill was no longer fancy but a growing fact. The last great monster that shadowed the path to brightness and beauty was Myers' Warehouse, doomed, if the prophets had but known, to extinction in 1950.

It is safe to say that, by this time, he was one of the best known Anglican parsons of his generation. Not only could *Punch* affectionately feature him in its pages, and Max Beerbohm gaily caricature him, but millions of people, some of them in outlandish places, had either read about him or come into contact with the Movement he had originated. A tremendous spiritual force, he had notably reshaped the thinking and behaviour of many of the younger generation.

Oddly, the Church's attitude was not entirely approbatory; many of the clergy, both "high" and "low," seemed suspicious of this new power released in their midst. We are reminded of

the remark of his cousin, Dick Sheppard: "The Church of England has a schoolmaster habit of promoting its safe men, and neglecting its geniuses." Certainly the Church has not yet seen fit to recognise in any way officially the labours and achievements of one of its most influential priests—it was left for the State to do that. In the Birthday Honours' List of 1933 he was created a Companion of Honour, a coveted distinction limited to fifty throughout the world and ranking only second to the Order of Merit which, in turn, is restricted to twenty-four. It was a timely gesture which, in a sense, paid official tribute to a great Movement as well as to the man who had inspired and shaped it. It surprised no one therefore when, in 1936, he was appointed Chaplain to the King. The British public, as represented by the State, was appreciative and articulate—the Church alone remained mute.

He was much absent from Tower Hill in the four or five years preceding the Second World War and his travels covered the Middle East, India, and the Union of South Africa. In passing through the Mediterranean countries and the Middle East he was traversing familiar territory, which was not the case in South Africa. And yet the way had been competently charted. Bert Oldfield, of the little mission post of Keiskhama Hoek, in the Eastern Province, had been the first to translate his memories of the Old House into action. When he heard that Tubby and Pat Leonard were not going to visit South Africa in 1925 he made up his mind to do something for Toc H off his own bat. He gathered his friends around a sixpenny bedroom lamp and lit the flame which was to sweep with growing intensity across the veldt and uplands of Southern Africa; it was the first lamp to be lit on the African continent and now rests on the tomb of Sir John Croke in All Hallows. Harry Ellison and his wife, touching African soil for the first time in 1926, confirmed and greatly expanded the work of Bert Oldfield: they left behind them thirty-five teams of men and returned in 1928 to find they had developed into some sixty units. They were followed by Gilbert Williams, whose lively persuasiveness taught the South Africans that thoughtfulness and gaiety are but the two sides of the same coin, and showed them the Toc H knack of spinning the coin. Then came Ronnie Grant ("Grantibus"), General Secretary at

British Headquarters, followed by W. H. Kinsey ("Gaika"), Padre Owen Watkins and Geoff Martin. They had travelled thousands of miles up and down and across the sub-continent, building along the coastal belts and far into the hinterland, scaling the heights and trudging the plains, and when, eventually, the Great Depression gripped Africa as it gripped the rest of the world, their work stood firm under the wise leadership of the High Commissioner, Sir Herbert Stanley, who had already served the Family well in Ceylon.

No, the Union was not unfamiliar to Tubby—the links were strong and friendly—but it was the first time he had actually set foot in it. Yet he had gauged its temper and knew its problems. The White Man had imposed himself and his civilisation on an ancient and mysterious continent without accurately assessing the consequences; he had created, sometimes through stupidity and greed, often inadvertently, an ethnical tension that could only be resolved by wisdom, tolerance, and infinite patience—qualities not easily discoverable in this world. Tubby rolled around and through that vast country like a sportive typhoon, touching Mombasa in East Africa, then on by air to Northern Rhodesia, and, finally, Cape Town, Johannesburg, Durban, East London, Pietermaritzburg, and a dozen other places, sweeping men to the peaks of piety from which they glimpsed prospects hitherto undreamed of: he compelled the attention of the leaders of commerce, industry, education and social welfare, and won the allegiance of hundreds of smaller men many of whom were equipped to become agents for Toc H and all it stood for. But the real nature of the Movement's contribution to the complex life of Southern Africa with its strong Colour Bar is contained in an extract from a letter he wrote to Kimberley, and which might be said to summarise, not only the true significance of his South African visit, but the future function of Toc H as he saw it and preached it. He discusses the country's "great problem," by which so many things must be adjusted, and goes on to say:

"Ultimately, and in the fullness of time, there is no doubt whatever where the verdict of Christianity must rest. Science now tells us that all life indeed is one, stretching from the

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mollusc and the protoplasm up the steep stairs which lead to the saint, the mystic and the poet. Within this tremendous compass the Colour question assumes a somewhat lesser aspect, as part only of the whole racial and international problem.

This problem, however, cannot best be solved by any abrupt impatience.

‘There is no workman, whoever he be,
Who worketh both well and hastilie.’

And God, greatest Workman, to Whom our universe is but a wayward flower, will scarcely bless the forcing of His hand. In Christ all faithful men are indeed already one. In Him all ethnic variance is but the divers facets of His radiant glory. The extremes of culture and ignorance, of ownership and service, of liberty and law, of sex and age, are solemnly surrendered.

Yet for the time we must content ourselves with pushing forward step by step along the road of understanding. To ignore animosities and divergences, differences of creed, and caste, and culture; to say these things are not where they most plainly are, is to deny the evidence of our senses, and to give no scope to the wisdom He has set within us for the gradual guidance of men’s minds towards the common goal. . . .

Thus, as things stand at present, Toc H must always begin among men of the race from which it first emerged; this is but natural; and, if there is anything that God hates, it is the wilfully unnatural attitude of mind. Toc H must then embrace by sympathy races akin to our own in instinct and tradition; thence it can again go forward and find forerunners in other minds eager for what it brings, yet widely aloof from much in English England. All this must be a natural process, too sacred to hasten or to delay. The standard of intelligence is really a far greater barrier than that of colour. Toc H in Colombo can include the Ceylonese and Cingalese, and of course the Ceylon Burgher; but it cannot for many years include the coolie, who simply would not know the A.B.C. of the instincts which make its cheerful freedom possible.

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Toc H in Bombay has one Branch wholly European, and a Group wholly Indian, on the best terms with one another and subject to occasional interfusion. But the main task of Toc H for the next few years is surely to provide the child races with a working example of European civilisation, expressing Christianity in acts of tolerance and unselfishness which need no gift of tongues."

He left Africa thoroughly exhausted. Seven thousand miles and over a hundred meetings of Toc H, besides civic functions, in four months had been too much for a man who was already tired even before he left England. He had been badly overworked in 1934 and, despite the warnings of friends, had insisted on fulfilling certain duties in the Middle East before passing on to South Africa. The tour was really a triumph of will power—vital, humorous, enthusiastic—but by the time he and Graham left Durban for Abadan he was in sorry shape. It was at Fields—the main oil field of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company—that he collapsed and was critically ill for some weeks with a kind of brain fever. At one stage it looked like the end, but he rallied and the Company's resourceful medical staff pulled him slowly through; by the spring of '35 he was convalescent and considered strong enough to travel on to his brother Hugh in Bombay. Meanwhile news of his illness had reached London and at a meeting of the Central Executive Frederick Baggallay, always more caustic than discreet, stood up and flatly declared that, do what they may, he for his part was sailing to India at his own cost. This he did, and brought his old friend home carefully on a passenger liner—"I owe," said Tubby afterwards, "everything to him."

Six months were spent in the doctor's care and the road to recovery often grew wearisome; it was a high moment therefore when Admiral Fisher invited him in the autumn to spend some months with the Mediterranean Fleet. Nothing could have been better. He stepped from the anaemic calm of the sickroom on to the carousal of world events: the Abyssinian crisis broke out, the Fleet was alerted, the world caught its breath—and Tubby's illness finally disappeared as if touched by a wand. One spark in the

wrong direction and the whole globe might be ablaze: what mattered one little life, then, when millions might die, mauled and mutilated by War's fiendish ingenuity? Tubby forgot himself and the minatory fingers of the doctors and began to bustle, for time, he said, might be shorter than anyone suspected. He started as Chaplain of the *Beagle* from which he brought ship after ship into his circumference of influence, ending his stay in the Mediterranean with over a score of destroyers and minesweepers in his "unofficial parish."

The Abyssinian crisis reached its unsatisfactory end, and he returned to England on the Flagship of Admiral Fisher who died shortly afterwards. It was a sad loss, depriving him of his best naval friend; but Rear Admiral Rodney Scott and Rear Admiral Binney, and some of his old Captains in destroyers, stood by to help and continued to invite him to the Mediterranean in the years to come.

In December 1937 Dick Sheppard died. He had been the guiding spirit in the Peace Pledge Union, pleading tirelessly its cause up and down the land, and somehow his death, at a comparatively young age, was construed by many as an ill-omen. But Tubby did not dwell on omens when he preached at the funeral service in St. Martin-in-the-Fields, he simply paid tribute as a debtor "Not to Dick Sheppard as a social servant; not to a prophet whose golden cord is broken; but to a hand and heart which mirrored clearly among mankind the hand and heart of Christ."

But, alas, there were few who mirrored Christ in the councils of the nations, or, if there were, they lacked significance. So Mars and Minerva twirled in a giddy rigadon that carried them ever more quickly towards the Gates of Death. It was a disturbed and apprehensive land when Tubby set out on H.M.S. *Liverpool* in 1939 to conduct a series of visits under the War Office to the British Army in India and to the R.A.F. The question in everyone's mind was—when will war come, sooner or later? It came soon enough. One month after Tubby arrived back Germany invaded Poland.

CHAPTER XV

ENGLAND was at war, and for the second time in twenty-five years her youth would be sacrificed on the altar of idealism or expediency—people hardly knew which, and even the cynics were put to it to decide. But away on the misty isle of Iona, off the west coast of Scotland, two men, unmoved by such quiddities, wrestled with the deep things of the spirit that alone could give light in the gathering darkness. George MacLeod, baronet and parson, and his old friend Tubby Clayton met on the dedicated soil of Iona where, long years before, they had gone to dream the dreams which the handsome Scot has now translated into a supreme centre of inspiration for young Scotland. The grey stones of the Abbey, neglected since the Reformation, were rising slowly from the fertile ground to give reality to the death-bed prophecy of the Celtic saint, Columba:

In Iona of my heart, Iona of my love,
Instead of monks' voices shall be lowing of cattle,
But ere the world come to an end,
Iona shall be as it was.

From Iona, it will be recalled, the greater part of Britain had been won for Christianity in the seventh century, and in the thirteenth, Benedictines began to build the Abbey whose eventual ruin and renascent glory St. Columba foresaw in his vision; it was in the fourth decade of the present century that a captain in the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, turned Presbyterian minister, began to restore Iona, with its common life, and to fulfil—at first, unconsciously—Columba's prophecy of its restoration and triumph. Iona, in the dream of George MacLeod and Tubby, was to be a spiritual dynamo galvanising into life the limp conscience of Scotland and England, infusing a sense of

purpose into the aimless strivings of twentieth-century men by imparting a new concept of religion. But in '39, when Tubby was invited to lecture to MacLeod's pupils in Iona, only the merest beginnings of the Community were manifest, and the prospect of another great war was confusing and terrible. "All through the month of August," Tubby has written, "the international situation grew more acute, and George rose to his full height and poured on us the spirit of Christ's passion. Hundreds assembled nightly in the Abbey to share the agony which found expression in his interpretation of those days."

On Saturday, September 2nd, he left Iona and made his way to Edinburgh where he reported to Scottish Command. They told him kindly, but firmly, that he was too old, and when he pointed to his record in the last war they replied that this was "a young man's war" and it was most unlikely that any Chaplain over the age of forty would be employed. In any case, his name had been removed from the Reserve in 1935 when he had reached fifty. Knowing their answer to be final, he walked across to pay his respects to Admiral Ramsey, known as "Ocean Swell." Although he had never held a Royal Navy Chaplaincy his experience of the Navy was wide and intimate. Admiral Ramsey must have known the details of his experience for there and then he equipped him with credentials entitling him to make for Scapa Flow, and to take with him, not only a young cousin, but also Pat Russell, the eldest son of his host, Sir David Russell of Fife.

They reached the *Iron Duke* out in the Flow and on the following morning Tubby was instructed to take immediate steps for the welfare of the naval personnel and fishermen, and to consult authorities at Kirkwall. Here he met once again Patrick Sutherland Graeme, the Laird of Orkney, who, having relinquished the post of Judge-Advocate General, had been for many years the Chairman of the Toc H Central Executive in London; he was now giving himself generously to the public service and Toc H affairs in the Orkneys. The Munich crisis in 1938 had caused Toc H to take a site in Orkney and while this was cancelled, or at least postponed when the jubilant democracies thought Neville Chamberlain had won, this act of foresight was a valid asset when war actually broke out.

Finances were providentially supplied. Lord Hankey had a friend who gave a hut, Lord Halifax another; and Queen Elizabeth (afterwards the Queen Mother), learning that Toc H required timber and tiling for a small Chapel on the island of Flotta, directed that its needs should be supplied from Glamis itself. This Chapel stands today. Kirkwall House, strongly supported by Lord Wakefield, exerted its influence throughout the islands and soon made itself the G.H.Q. of Orkney's six Toc H centres; yet despite these efforts the work of the Movement would have been gravely impaired had it not been for the timely aid of the American Society, The Pilgrim Trust, which, in response to the plea of William Lusk, Rector of Ridgefield, Connecticut, endowed the war work of Toc H in Orkney. And then, with the sinking of the *Royal Oak*, it went so far as to maintain the Convalescent Home which Toc H had established in a great house at Woodwick. The details of this work were naturally beyond the capacity of any one man to manage, and Toc H sent up an appropriate staff and volunteers leaving Tubby free to dart where'er his gifted fancy saw fit.

Writing to a friend of his two-years sojourn in the Orkneys he remarked: "Archdeacon Kissack, when I reached the Orkneys, was on the threshold of an operation. Thus, for the first time in my whole existence, I found myself lent from the London Diocese to Bishop Deane, who ruled and inspired the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney. When the Archdeacon was about again, I found myself enabled to pursue the course which Shakespeare described as having 'one foot on sea and one foot on shore.' I made two trips to Iceland and investigated Heckla from the air thanks to a tour with a Norwegian pilot."

There was slight chance of leave in the Orkneys, partly owing to the difficulties of travelling to and fro, but he did manage to get down to London for Allhallowmas, 1940, and again at the beginning of December. On the latter occasion he had planned to start his return on December 9th, having a number of Communicants posted in various islands round the Flow, and in the drifter and trawler fleets. Chaplains were scarce, and no one else could take the work which he had planned to do at Christmas. He little knew that the early hours of Monday, December 9th,

were to be among the most memorable in his life; it was then that his beloved All Hallows was first struck and partially ruined.

The old church had already undergone the severe strain of near-by explosions, but had not been harmed. It stood intact amid increasing ruin, and many believed that in some wonderful way it would receive almost divine protection. During his visit to London for Allhallowmas he had consulted both Churchwardens and several of his chief parishioners and members of the City Corporation about the advisability of transferring to safety such precious furnishings and ornaments as could be removed. One man whom he approached had a telegram on his desk saying his son had been killed, and Tubby's question died on his lips. But everybody he asked gave the same reply—to remove the precious objects from All Hallows would be construed as a cowardly action and torpedo the morale of hard-pressed citizens. One of his colleagues said he would resign rather than minister within a church which feared its fate. "I had not their faith," he afterwards wrote, "I told them so, but bowed to their conviction in the matter. We had already at the outbreak removed the precious plate and the historic documents; the Hambro Treasury was also filled with the Font Cover wrought by Grinling Gibbons, two panels of stained glass from the Great Fire, and sundry other irreplaceable items, such as the Royal Arms from the organ loft. But all the modern windows (which had cost £4,000 since 1923) and the most perfect organ in all London according to the choice of Dr. Schweitzer, remained within the church and have now perished. If I had acted on my own precaution, these would have been preserved; the Church, however, would have shown fear and failed to keep its work of consolation fulfilled throughout the first year of the War."

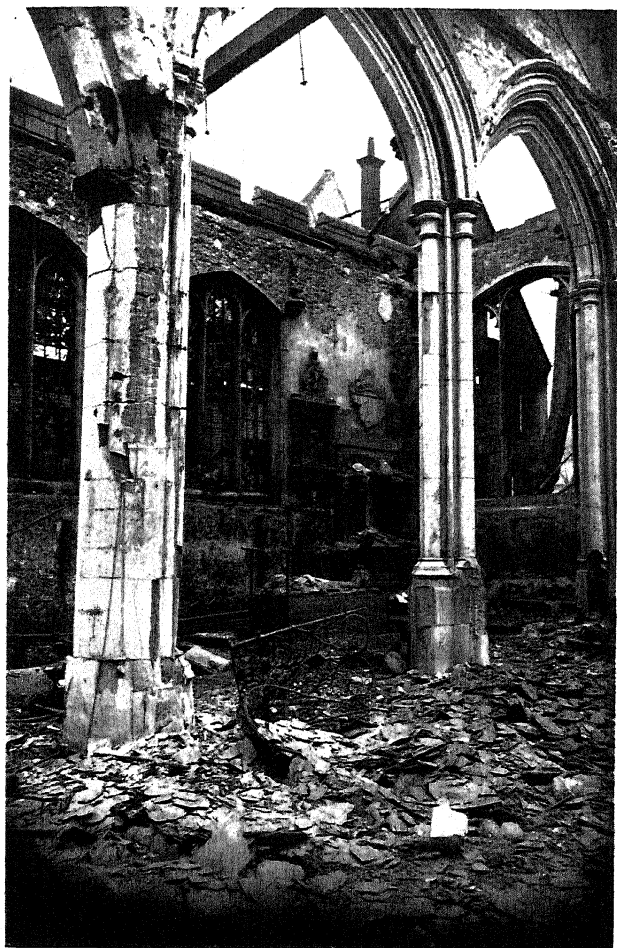
At 8 a.m., December 8th, he stood once again before the Holy Table, presented to the Church by Major Richard Burden in memory of his wife in 1673, and celebrated the Eucharist. Standing four-square against the great east wall, superbly carved in English oak and of incomparable dignity, it had never once been moved from the original spot; behind him were the Communion rails of beaten brass, with two delicate gates so exquisitely poised that they had swung with a mere touch upon their perfect hinges

for 220 years. How was he to know that this ancient Shrine, for whose miraculous preservation he was now giving thanks, would be non-existent in twenty-four hours? At eleven he climbed, had he but known, for the last time into the crow's nest pulpit, set aloft against the northern pillar of the Nave, and from which, it is supposed, every translator of the Authorised Version preached in turn.

At 2 a.m. the following morning, December 9, 1940, a bomb, plainly meant to hit the Tower of London, was released a hair's-breadth too late and crashed on the east vestry of All Hallows which disappeared completely in a moment; the east wall, one of the oldest features, came crashing down, leaving the church itself with a huge gap torn in the sanctuary. Amazingly enough, the Undercroft took and withstood the appalling strain and thereby prevented the entire structure from collapsing in utter ruin.

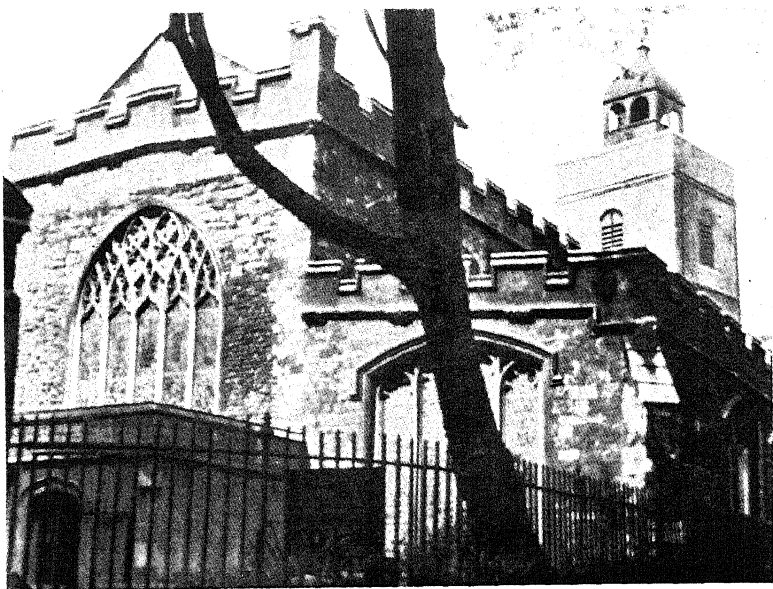
The sky was saffron with unextinguished fires, and the distant rumble of guns could still be heard as Michael Coleman, the Acting Vicar of All Hallows (and now the Bishop of Qu'Appelle), led Tubby, always hopeless in the dark, through the fine dust and over the bitter-smelling bricks of newly devastated buildings towards the crippled church. Billingsgate was already astir, and when the slow daylight began to creep across that scene of desolation a multitude of men of all descriptions made their way to All Hallows, which they mourned with obvious emotion. Tubby and Michael stood at the north porch, blocked with fallen beams, and men came up in turn out of the crowd proffering gifts, copper and silver and even paper money, which they could ill afford; an alms box was placed at the threshold of the porch and all through the morning it filled again and again. People stepped up to it, shy but determined, stepped back again to be lost and undistinguished in the growing crowd which, by midday, completely surrounded the church.

The next fortnight was tough going. He returned to duty at Scapa Flow, which took almost two days, his mind full of his recent tragedy; once there, he started without hesitation a tour of the islands, where isolated troops were stolidly stationed, serving the guns which guarded Scapa Flow. Trawlers and drifters, freighters and tankers, were also glad to have brief services aboard. When Christmas came he gave Communion to some three hundred

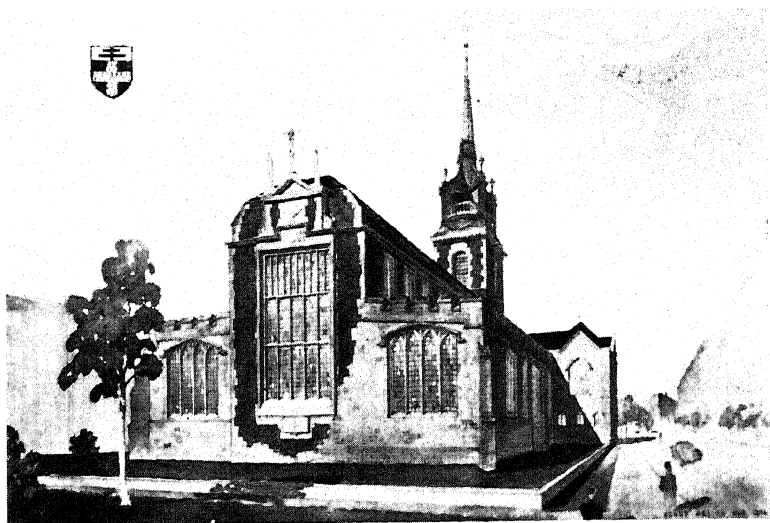


ALL HALLOWS-BY-THE-TOWER

Destroyed by enemy action 1940



ALL HALLOWS-BY-THE-TOWER, 1939



THE DESIGN FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF ALL HALLOWS-BY-THE
TOWER

men scattered at posts of duty round the Flow. But the joy of Christmas was as elusive as the peace it proclaimed. Five days later he received a wire from Frederick Baggallay, then Rector of St. Swithun, London Stone, telling him, with a minimum of words, that All Hallows had been completely gutted by incendiaries upon the Eve of Holy Innocents. It was a bad blow because, in a subconscious sort of way, he had thought the martyrdom of the Hill complete, and, at that stage, the damage to All Hallows was not beyond the enterprise of architects to repair. Now it was ended; or so it seemed.

It was not until the middle of January that he managed to leave the Flow, but before he had crossed the Border two more pieces of tragic news reached him. He was seated with an old friend in a big hotel in Inverness when someone tuned-in to the one o'clock news. They listened, but there was nothing of importance. Then came the final item. "Lord Wakefield died this morning." He was stunned. The Old Chief, as he affectionately called him, and his benefactor, through whom Tower Hill, Leprosy, and much that was vital in Toc H had been translated from dreams into reality, was an ageing man, but he had had no idea that he was otherwise than well. He and Lady Wakefield had withdrawn to a doctor's quiet house where, when Tubby last saw them, they were living a Darby and Joan existence, more than content with their new simplicity and, despite the gravity of the times, still undeterred in their hopes and optimism. He had, it transpired, died as the result of a land mine dropped in his garden. But that was not all. When he reached Glasgow on his journey south a wire awaited him that "Mus" (W. J. Musters), his first fellow-servant after the War had unexpectedly died on the morrow of Lord Wakefield's passing. He hurried to London by the night train, and although too late for the service (the train was four hours late) he was in time to intervene and ask that the ashes of his old comrade be placed in the Undercroft which, he had learned, was undisturbed. The interment of Muster's ashes in the Undercroft was movingly described by P.B.C. in a tribute written shortly after the event:

The Undercroft was lit by lamps and candles, and Arthur Pettifer was there in charge with all arrangements beautifully

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ordered. So we came East, past the great Blacksmiths' gates and stood in a half circle, lit by candles, which showed indeed the place was quite unharmed. The black and golden pall which now has covered the ashes of so many of my friends, somehow survived and was again in use. It was the gift of Mrs. Newman Tremearne. Wag had succeeded, with the local printer, in getting the old service into print. All our stocks had been consumed by fire. We prayed together, standing in thanksgiving. None of those present will forget the scene.

After the Blessing, we were all reluctant to break the silence which surrounded us, a silence which was not of Death but Life. We felt Life pulsating through the place, while we were drawn together. It then seemed as if the cloud of witnesses who had for many ages woven thankful prayers in the great Church had come to be with us. The kindly light shone softly on some names fondly remembered, both of men and women, who had within Toc H fulfilled their task; and Sergeant William Musters thus came home.

Tubby returned to the Orkneys, now being subjected to fairly constant bombing, but left finally in the autumn of '41 because the work had reached a regular war-time regime. Tankers, to whom he owed a deep allegiance, were having a rough time of it, and it was arranged with the authorities of the Anglo-Saxon Line that he should take a prolonged trip with their famous Commodore, Captain Jackson, in order to report upon conditions. Pearl Harbour happened while they were at sea. Eventually they put into San Francisco where, with Gracie Fields, he took part in the launching of freighters from De Keyser's yards; no eye witness reported the meeting between these two inveterately British characters but we may be sure that each entertained the other. Crossing from the Coast to Chicago he sensed the crude, enormous strength of the continent, uncoiling itself like some magnificent beast preparing for the spring of battle; coming from a small beleaguered island, fighting for its very life, the vastness and deceiving serenity of the prairies and towns through which he passed were amazing, and very reassuring. In Chicago he was met with a typical gesture of American open-handedness—eight

hundred waistcoats had been made in six weeks for presentation to the British Tanker Fleet. Russian-Americans presented the fur, and German-Americans tailored the waistcoats. He was experiencing a completely different America from the one he had imagined when he had said to Jock Gillespie, after the latter's return from the States in the early 'twenties: "I have decided to include America in my prayers again."

Largely through the efforts of Pryor Grant and W. B. Lusk, Toc H had sunk tenuous roots in several Eastern cities, but, from the outset, it was obvious to unbiased observers that there was much in the Movement that was distinct from the American social, if not religious, genius. When Pryor Grant died in 1937 Toc H, U.S.A., lost its leader, a saint and scholar whose selfless energy alone at that stage could have endowed it with a degree of permanence. By 1942 organised units in the cities had disappeared though there were still many sympathisers, as time was to prove; Tubby took his stand on the basis of universality, Toc H being Christian was indifferent to national and social barriers. Recognising the need for an American flavour within the Movement, if it were to succeed in the States, he pleaded, privately and publicly, that the spirit of Bataan and Malta—each symbolising the greatness of the people that so daringly defended it—might prove to be the growth of this society, in which both men and women can take part.

He worked his way down South to Texas ports, his task on the East Coast being exactly what it had been on the West—to build up groups of quiet friendly people near the tanker ports who would welcome men from the British tankers when they called in to pick up their dangerous cargoes, and the response was warmly generous. He returned to the far north in the autumn, sailing from Halifax on the ill-fated *Eulima* which reached Belfast and was torpedoed on her return, with only three survivors. He made his way to London and reported to the Ministry of War Transport.

Tower Hill was holding doggedly to its task. All around were dire devastation and personal tragedies beyond number, but the witness of the old church was being maintained in the Chapel of the Undercroft, and the world-wide activities of the Movement

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were still being directed from Toc H Headquarters at 47 Francis Street. His absence with the Tanker Fleet had, in a sense, isolated Tubby from the war-time activities of Toc H but now, standing once more on the Hill, he caught a bird's-eye view of its labours on many frontiers, at home and abroad. In Britain, which, after all, was an armed garrison, some three hundred clubs had been provided for men and women separated from their families, and in the Middle East they were dotted in Jerusalem, Tel-Aviv, Aden, Cairo, Alexandria, and later in Benghazi, Tripoli, Tunis and Maison Blanche. From India they moved forward to Malaya and the Far East, and the Toc H mobile units were to follow the armies into Italy and Normandy; in December 1944, Talbot House was regained when Poperinghe was freed from German occupation. The Toc H clubs were clubs all right, but with a difference. There were the usual amenities—concerts, parties, informal gatherings and all the rest of it, but when it came to deeper things there was an indefinable touch that went far beyond the air of professional piety all too familiar in "religious canteens."

While Tubby was in England, between trips with the Tanker Fleet, Neville Talbot died. He preached a tribute to him in St. Margaret's, Westminster. Neville, he said, "personified, in a tight corner, a figure of invincible salvation. He, like his Master in a crazy boat, appeared to be commanding wind and weather. I do not think that Neville ever permitted himself to pray for his own personal well-being. His 'gowne of glory' covered other men."

Those were the days, 1942, when Rommel's name was an incantation in the bazaars of Cairo and Alexandria. The outlook was by no means cheerful when Tubby sailed from Londonderry to Gibraltar in a small naval craft, and there picked up a freighter bound in convoy for Bombay; thence to Ceylon, and from there straight to the Hooghli, where, at Budge Budge, tankers had a thin time. Word awaited him to report to Delhi, and he became the guest of the Viceroy, Field Marshal Lord Wavell, who had been Chairman of Toc H at Deepcut long years before. At Delhi he discovered a circumstance that almost completely unnerved him—he was ordered to lecture upon the Tanker Fleet to the assembled S.E.A. High Command. He survived the ordeal, aided

by a billiard cue and an enormous map made overnight, and passed on to Bombay.

He stayed with his brother Hugh who, though retired, had been recalled as the War-time Welfare Chairman; from there to Karachi, over to Abadan and up to Teheran he made his way to Basra and Bagdad, thence to Damascus; finally to Haifa, sailing for Alexandria, and then again to Malta. His ship took several loads of oil from Haifa to various ports like Naples and Ancona and then, in the autumn of '44 he came at last to Gibraltar to learn, as in a dream, that William Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, his close friend for over half a century, had died quite suddenly at the age of sixty-four; not only had he lost a dear friend, whose heart was resolute with joy, but Toc H a great and wise counsellor who saw its problems against the background of a world-wide mission. He was immediately flown home by the R.A.F. to attend the Abbey Service. It was the end of his war-time travels.

Soon after peace had come again to Europe he went, with "Barkis" and Paul Slessor, on his first post-war visit to the Old House and found it clean and garnished, the sacred treasures, concealed by the townspeople during the German occupation, once more in their familiar places. He stood in the Upper Room and through an open window gazed over the housetops to the fields where on a long ago yesterday young men, so confident in their surging youth, had died for a world that finds it hard to learn the lessons of charity, and he dreamed of friends alive "among the ancient dead." The next morning he left the Old House early and recorded: "The white mist lay in patches on the plain, so low that we could almost see the sun turning the upper surface of the mist into a dissipation of fine gold. No child has seen a ghost in the whole Salient. The men there have gone Home right from the first; and the whole land, thus bathed in a clearer light, seemed to betoken blessed resurrection; for night and pain were fled and Life was stirring."

CHAPTER XVI

THE long history of All Hallows has been closely woven with the North American continent, and many champions of liberty, including William Penn, learned their first lessons of Christian independence in the old parish before crossing the seas. All Hallows was one of the very few churches mentioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury in a letter to the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in 1945 as having certain moral claims upon the sympathies of Americans, and scattered here and there throughout the country, more especially along the eastern seaboard, were men and women who were quite willing to recognise the claim and lend a hand in the formidable task of reconstruction. It was to co-ordinate these intentions and efforts that one autumn afternoon in 1946 Charles Sumner Bird, Barry Cassell, William Lusk and myself met in New York.

The upshot was a letter inviting Tubby to visit the U.S.A. and state his case. We were confident that such a trip, judiciously handled, would not be unprofitable. He replied that before he could accept he would have to consult "a complicated series of friends" to whom he was responsible in one way or another; he went on to say: "it would be my object to plead for strong support in the rebuilding of All Hallows on grounds of interwoven history, and as the shrine which animates Toc H. But Toc H also needs financial support; and if I were alone in the endeavour it is unlikely that I should succeed. I could indeed fulfil a lecture tour, dividing any proceeds and donations, according to the wishes of the donors, between All Hallows and the Toc H Movement; but I am more than sixty years of age, and such a lecture tour would test my strength to breaking point were I alone. I should be bound to bring, or to acquire, a colleague or companion in the work; and this would add severely to the expenses, and place us more than doubly in your debt."

The gesture from America was a tonic to Tubby. It gave him confidence in a situation that held few gleams of encouragement; he had written, and meant every word of it: "In 1940 All Hallows fell, and all life altered with the fall of it. Toc H without a Guild Church has for me the atmosphere which would have manifested itself in the lower rooms of the Old House in Poperinghe, had some bombardment wrecked the Upper Room, and we had then tried to get on without it. In Toc H with no Guild Church, I am homeless; and I believe that many share my view. Therefore my main endeavour till I die must be to see All Hallows on Tower Hill so cared for that it can be well restored, to continue the task committed to its charge thirteen centuries ago, before England was England."

But much courage and optimism would be needed. Not only was the old shrine in ruins but the rateable value of the Parish had been reduced by enemy action from £82,667 to £41,525; a state of affairs that seriously jeopardised the stipends of himself and his fellow-workers on the Hill. Gone forever were the glorious days when he carried, suspended from his neck by a cord, a little black bag inside his shirt stuffed with one- and five-pound notes, and whenever he encountered need largesse was chucklingly distributed. It is true that the assets of Toc H were worth three hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, excluding the considerable Wakefield properties to which Toc H appoints the Trustee body, but these funds had been given for specific purposes (various chaplaincy endowments totalled more than £80,000) and were most carefully conserved. In 1946 an impending Bill in the House of Lords for extinguishing tithes and tithe rates in the City of London was petitioned against by the Vicar of All Hallows and his two Churchwardens on the grounds that it would "prejudicially affect the maintenance and furtherance of the spiritual, charitable and welfare work with which All Hallows Barking is especially associated in the minds of many people not only in this country but throughout the world." Things were grim, and likely to be worse. It was at this point that the invitation came from his American friends whose loyalty surprised even Tubby.

There had been a marked change in his attitude towards America over the years. The 1922 visit inspired a violent dislike for what

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he considered the brassy materialism of "the American way of life" and for some time he took the rather tactless view that if the future of mankind ever came to rest in the hands of the United States, then God help it. But the second visit—there were to be others too—modified his ideas. He found that America, like his own country, could not be evaluated at a glance. He learned that its best types are as fine as any, and its worst are, perhaps, no worse than elsewhere; it was simply that everything was magnified by height and breadth, and continental perspectives replaced those of a "tight little island." Gradually he developed an affection for America, deep and abiding.

His visit to the States was preceded by two emissaries who smoothed the way—R. Olaf Hambro, Chairman of the greatest private bank remaining in London, and Captain Gordon Lawes. Hambro's trip to America was one of personal business, but he took time out to talk to one or two of those who had invited Tubby and convey the substance of his discussions to London. Lawes had much more time at his disposal. He had been a prime spirit in Toc H Malaya, and at Kuala Lumpur in 1925 he had told Tubby that he had attended meetings of Toc H mainly for "Light," which brought him to his friends, wonderfully reunited in the silence. He travelled ninety miles down jungle paths, across rivers, to obey their summons. Having been released from four years of imprisonment in a Japanese camp—he was one of the officers who surrendered at Singapore—he was shipped home to England a living skeleton and carried ashore on a stretcher. When he had recovered his health he wrote to his old friend on Tower Hill telling him he had retired from the Colonial Service and offering his services to be used in any way he saw fit. Tubby, not one to miss an opportunity, dispatched him to Australia and Malaya to report on Toc H and Leprosy; arranging, however, that he should travel through the States in order to finalise the details of the forthcoming visit.

Gordon Lawes spent several weeks in the country, and sandwiched in a quick trip to Canada to alert the friends of Toc H should Tubby reach the North. At the end of his stay he drew up an expert memorandum which stressed the objects of P.B.C.'s visit, and the means by which to achieve them. It is worth noting

that the purpose of the invitation, as set forth in the memorandum, was to be :

- (a) To cement the traditional friendship of England and the United States.
- (b) To interpret the political and international problems of the day in Christian terms, and to expound the religious basis of democracy.
- (c) To help provide, in a measure, the spiritual strength which all admit now is the only hope for building the peace.
- (d) To translate the sacrifice of men and women in the services into civilian expression like the Christian Ministry, Social Service, Schoolmastering, etc.

The memorandum was careful to point out that "the accumulation of funds for the rebuilding of All Hallows will be a secondary consideration in the plan of campaign. This is a perfectly legitimate appeal, and everyone who invited P.B.C. to speak would be informed of this secondary consideration so that they would be guided in their selection of audiences. There is every indication that, planned along these lines, the tour will be a considerable financial gain to All Hallows."

But until two or three months before he actually sailed for New York it was still undecided whether P.B.C. would first visit Australia. Archbishop Halse of Queensland had invited his three Old Pauline friends, Sir Leslie Wilson, former Governor of Queensland, Field Marshal Viscount Montgomery and Tubby to visit Queensland as his guests in July 1947 which would have given Tubby ample opportunity to inspect Toc H in Australia and the Far East before going on to the United States. He had also suffered a grievous blow in the death of a favourite nephew—the younger son of his brother Sir Hugh who himself was to die eighteen months later—and friends seriously questioned whether he could stand up to the rigours of a lecture tour in a North American winter. Yet he finally decided in favour of America and in August 1947 the Steering Committee in New York received word that he was sailing in the *Queen Mary* in October, accompanied by Captain the Hon. Andrew Elphinstone, a nephew of the Queen, who would be

his fellow guest and partner until he, Elphinstone, returned to be present at the Royal wedding in November.

Tubby, as usual, was burdened with a staggering amount of luggage and letters to significant people on the continent. His arrival in New York was typical. While Andrew Elphinstone and sundry porters rushed around searching frantically for iron cases of all shapes and sizes he calmly lectured me, who had met him, on the virtues of St. Ninian and the Scottish conversion of England. And when a perspiring porter eventually came forward for a tip he was given a picture of Tubby's cocker spaniel, Billy—surely the most original tip ever bestowed upon a gaping New Yorker. It was reverse Lend-Lease with a vengeance. Across 50th Street and down Fifth Avenue he continued his lecture interspersed with frequent asides on the city—its buildings . . . “Walt Disney on a spree”; its people . . . “perfectly splendid, my dear fellow, perfectly splendid”; the rising steam from its thoroughfares . . . “Hell seems uncomfortably near, old man”; the homicidal antics of its taxi-drivers . . . “are they anti-British by any chance?” By the time they reached the Rectory the driver was in a coma though Elphinstone, inured to Tubby's volubility after five days at sea, looked only vaguely quizzical.

At a glance it was the same old Tubby still cylindrical, still careless of dress, only greyer and older. But a longer association revealed a rather different Tubby—a man running very near to the edge of emotional control, caught in the coils of a high nervous tension; his jocularly was spasmodic and unspontaneous and there were bursts of irritability which startled his friends and surprised many strangers who had expected to meet (not unnaturally) a twinkling Friar Tuck who had caught a glimpse of heaven. That, of course, had they but known, was the real Tubby. The man people met in the States during 1947–48 was under an enormous strain and obsessed with a single idea—that of rebuilding his beloved All Hallows, and his preoccupation with wealthy and influential people left a disagreeable impression in some quarters. With men who were unable to help All Hallows but who wished to see Tubby for himself he was often impatient, and his tactlessness on several notable occasions was only redeemed by the urbane, careless charm of Elphinstone, who delighted all

whom he met. In fairness though, certain things should be remembered. Tubby was far from well (an operation followed later); he was desperately anxious to justify every moment of his six months' absence from All Hallows which he had left in a time of crisis; and, rightly or wrongly, he had a curious presentiment that time was against him in his great struggle to restore the ancient shrine. Never once, however, did the ability to scrutinise himself, beneath a searchlight of honesty, forsake him. Sometimes, in the midst of one of his most difficult moments, he would suddenly turn and say to someone: "My dear old friend, I can only wish you had known me twenty years ago," or "Really, old boy, the So-and-so's are veritable saints, putting up with a disagreeable old codger like myself. Perfectly splendid." Yet for all his idiosyncrasies born of strain observant people were not deceived. From all walks of life they felt, after his departure, that they had met a great man.

After his departure—the phrase is used advisedly because when Tubby was with people during that last visit it was often difficult for them to see the wood for the leaves. If the tempo of life in the States is fast—and it is—then he certainly helped to increase it. His attention to detail . . . triplicate of this, quadruplicate of that, pamphlets, advertisements, photographs, bulletins, memoranda, notes and notes and more notes . . . was fantastic, and his dithered aides, or whoever else he could dragoon, were kept in a perpetual flurry dashing to all points of the city and, frequently, the State. No words can possibly describe the strain he imposed on any household with which he stayed nor his typhonic switches of temperament; at times it seemed as if all his erstwhile jocundity and marvellous good humour had somersaulted into sheer perverseness. Stanley Clapham, passing through New York shortly before Tubby arrived, proved himself something of a prophet when he remarked, half-humorously: "The Old Man's superb. But your maid will probably leave after twenty-four hours and your cook will stand it for three days." He demanded tea at all hours (and if anyone is foolish enough to think that *they* could have refused him they simply have not experienced Tubby), turned up late for meals or, usually, not at all, made requests and withdrew them, gave orders and countermanded them. He would have a

house spellbound with weird stories or a scintillating monologue when, unexpectedly, he would rise from his chair, mutter "good nights," and go up to his room where he would sit writing and writing until two or three in the morning. And when a cup of tea was taken to him at 8 a.m. he would be found, not asleep, but propped up in bed reading his Greek Testament.

Two days after landing in New York he and Andrew Elphinstone travelled down to Baltimore to stay with Mr. and Mrs. Barry Cassell of whom he had written in a letter to Gordon Lawes "a famous pair whom I adore . . . Barry himself is a superb example of the well-born American who loves Great Britain. I used to fill their garden and their home with obscure British sailors; every room was at the service of the Fleet and tanker crews, with no distinction and no hesitation." Cassell had arranged, among other things, for him to address the select and influential Maryland Historical Society, and from there he proceeded, by prearrangement, to speak to learned societies and important congregations and groups throughout the Eastern States. His performances were patchy, depending on his health. He astonished one audience by talking mainly about Billy, and his doggish complaints, but before the distinguished Newcomen Society in New York he gave a brilliant and restrained summary of England's difficulties and the trials and stubborn courage of Tower Hill.

The three weeks preceding the departure of Elphinstone for England were spent in and around New York, and the most important gathering of the tour was then held in the Down Town Association. It was a luncheon arranged by General Cornelius Wickersham. There were not more than twenty-five present, including top-flight industrialists and public men, among whom was the tragic, brooding figure of John G. Winant, former Ambassador to the Court of St. James. It was very informal, and in the speeches that followed Tubby was at his best, comic and serious by turn, and persuasively moving when he described, as to a group of friends, the plight of the Hill.

It was at this luncheon that he made a surprising suggestion. At the time it seemed more like an afterthought or, perhaps, a gesture to those present than a practical idea, and yet within two years an American paper was seriously proposing that it might

conceivably be a means through which the U.N. might achieve its supreme goal. No site in London, he said, had so true a claim as Tower Hill to be the nursery of the American colonists, for within its boundaries had lived the Saltonstalls, the Appletons, the Udalls, and thirty-five Washingtons were buried in the immediate neighbourhood of the parish church. What could be more natural, at a time when London's credit had fallen into a tragic period, than the return of young Americans during the summer months to a spot where many of their ancestors had lived, in order to relieve harassed workers who could not otherwise expect surcease or a holiday? In happier days senior boys from the public schools and young men from the universities could be relied upon for such relief and to be friends and leaders to the Cockney youngsters in their clubs and camps, but now the Army gobbled them up and the Hill was left woefully understaffed. But similar types from American schools and universities willing to do such international volunteer work could stop the gap and, at the same time, improve that intimacy of friendship between the two peoples that was the keystone to world peace and security.

He acknowledged his indebtedness to his old friend, John Winant, from whom had come this inspiration. It was the American Ambassador who, after wandering time and again through smoking ruins left by a heavy raid, had got to know something of the guts and humour of the East Londoner, and had expressed the hope that some means would be devised to bring the Cockney a little closer to the heart of America. He was willing to do all in his power to further such an effort and, at that luncheon, he informed Tubby privately that he had resolved to accompany him on his visits to American schools and colleges. Two days later the world learned that Winant had died by his own hand.

Tubby was left to carry on the scheme alone. He made up his mind, however, that the Volunteers should be named the Winant Volunteers in honour of this staunch friend of Britain.

Undaunted, he got in touch with friends in many States and asked them to approach their Senior Colleges and Universities. Arrangements were made for him to speak to many hundreds of students. One of his first visits was to St. Paul's, Concord. There Tubby told the senior boys how it had come about that John

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Winant, their old school-fellow, had come to love the genuine London Cockney. He told them of the Children's Beach below Tower Hill, which had been given by George V; how these 150 yards reclaimed from the mud and slime of the Thames had been spread with four thousand tons of gravel and sand by wharfingers and lightermen; and of the guilt and frustration he had felt when in August 1947, after the Life Guards of the Beach had been called up for their Army training, five children in one week-end had been drowned. Young America spoke in the Head Prefect's reply. "Quite enough London children have been killed from 1940 to 1945. There shall be no more drowning on that beach. The Winant Volunteers will see to that." They were as good as their word. From that time there have been no more casualties. Moreover, this was only the beginning of a scheme, a scheme which not only fills an important gap left by National Service in the day-to-day working of many welfare organisations in the poorest part of London, but also stands as a witness to Anglo-American friendship.



The departure of Andrew Elphinstone for England was a decided loss. He had the talent—a very considerable one—to manage Tubby and his mountainous luggage while simultaneously pleading the cause of All Hallows from the layman's point of view. He was a great success with all the Americans whom he met without imperilling his relationship with Tubby whose moods were like an April sky. It was no mean feat; but he returned to England exhausted. His place was taken by someone unknown to Tubby which immediately put him out of humour. Bob Craigie who, at the request of another, had travelled from England at his own expense, was an essentially lovable Etonian who had never in his twenty-three years met anyone quite like P.B.C. It says much for his basic grit that he never lost his temper, even when Tubby was most trying, and always spoke of the "Old Man" with good humour and genuine affection. But those four months as an aide must have been a gruelling experience.

They hurried South dragging behind them an indescribable assortment of baggage. Their host in Dallas, Texas, was Dean

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Gerald Moore, and within a few days after their arrival Dallas had pledged itself to raise \$2,500 towards the reconstruction of All Hallows. He was deeply impressed with many of the Texans and the vigour of the Episcopal Church. After a quick visit to New Orleans they returned to Dallas from where Craigie flew down to Savannah to spend Christmas with relatives and Tubby was joined by Charles Bradshaw, a young veteran from Iowa, who undertook to accompany him through his Texas trip free of any charge. The trip took them, among other places, to San Antonio where for three days they were the guests of the Fourth U.S. Army at Fort Sam Houston, a privilege due in the first case to General Eisenhower. Returning once more to Dallas they were rejoined by Craigie who was to go with Tubby to the West Coast while Bradshaw travelled North to pick up the threads that needed attention.

He was back in New York by the end of February, having toured California and called in at Chicago. Bob Craigie sailed for England leaving him with Bradshaw who was to accompany him to Boston and Canada, and then across to Tower Hill. He stayed this time at the Harvard Club in New York but was frequently in and out of the General Theological Seminary which, with its customary benevolence, threw open its doors to him. He found there a group of young men, headed by Paul Moore and Christopher Morley, Jr., who were admirably qualified to initiate the Winant Volunteers and they, in turn, caught something of the "Old Man's" fire. Sitting in their digs, talking to them about the deep things of the spirit was for him like stepping back over the years to Red Lion Square or even the more solemn moments of Talbot House. Moore and Morley relate that one of the moving experiences of their lives—and both were ex-servicemen—was when Tubby sat one evening before their fire talking, in an oddly exciting way, about the sacramental life: for an hour or two, in the presence of two young men on the threshold of Orders, his cares and weariness and recent petulance dropped from him, and they saw the Tubby who had won men to Christ.

But moments like these were rare; he was far too busy consulting old friends (Coleman Jennings, Seth Pierrepont, Louis Washburn, and others who had helped him) and bidding adieux which usually

took the following form: "My dear old friend, I simply must see you before I leave, but it can only be for a moment. I have eighty letters to write tonight." Amazingly, he somehow managed to do them—at the cost of sleep, that is. You sometimes had the feeling that the flame within him was too strong for his body and, at any moment, he would be consumed before your eyes. In those final days of the American tour he left people exhausted rather than exalted. Yet his sincerity was patent. There was never a thought of self, however queer his behaviour, and, occasionally, it seemed very queer from the American point of view. No one knows what happened at the Harvard Club but it is said that when leaving he lined up the coloured porters like a guard of honour and gave each one a salutary talk—nothing quite like that had ever happened in the history of the Club. It is also said that when it came for him to tip a coloured chambermaid, whether at the Club or elsewhere I know not, he found he had no money which had been consigned to the care of his aide. He thereupon gave her a photo of Billy, his dog, and told her all about him and of his devotion to the old Guild Church. The colloquy ended with the maid giving Tubby five dollars! It was for All Hallows, of course, but the episode is illustrative of the intensity with which he lived and breathed his mission, taking the trouble to explain his cause and need to a coloured maid whom most men would have dismissed with a nod or arranged to tip later. And the woman's gift, given spontaneously and from the heart, probably did her more good than a dozen tips. It is a fine point of moral theology, anyhow!

Whatever the shortcomings of the tour, and of his own temperament while engaged on it, he had reason to feel satisfied. Over \$40,000 had been promised or subscribed, mainly from Boston and Texas, in steel, timber and money for the restoration of the North Aisle of All Hallows, and word had come that a glorious gift of bells had been given by Mr. J. W. McConnell of Toronto, Canada. More important, he left behind him, not the impression of a wayward eccentric (which he sometimes appeared to be), but of a man of courage and great faith. He was obviously tired and unwell—far older than his years too—but he did not hesitate to tackle a gruelling tour in the hope that it might help to restore

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power to Tower Hill. Americans are shrewd appraisers of character and, for the most part, they saw in Tubby a man who walked with God.

He left New York for Boston to enter a private hospital for an operation after which he convalesced at "Endean," the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bird. He felt fitter than he had for years when he finally looked in on Toc H, Toronto, thanked John McConnell for his gift, and sailed for England in April. Three months later on a lovely summer's afternoon, July 19, 1948, H.M. the Queen laid the Foundation Stone for the rebuilding of All Hallows, and the Stone bore the inscription:

"Ethelburga founded me in 675, Samuel Pepys rescued me from the Great Fire in 1666. 1940 the enemy gravely wounded me, 1948 loving friends restored me."

As the Queen left the Undercroft for her waiting car a riot of melody tumbled from the new Canadian bells, out over the Hill, and down to the River, proclaiming to all London and the world that "Christ is not dead, but risen," and power had come once more to Great Tower Hill. Surely, the *faith* of a righteous man availeth much.



This man has loved two buildings with a peculiar intensity, but neither Talbot House, Poperinghe, nor All Hallows, Berkyngechirche, has ever obscured, other than temporarily, his passion for men's souls and the ways of human kind. Each was a trysting spot where men, rough hewn some of them, others refined by suffering's fire, met together in a common cause, and thus each, in Tubby's mind, was hallowed by sweet association. But men came first. All Hallows must be restored! That has been the determination of its Vicar since that evil night in 1941, but he has stressed, even more sternly, that Toc H must labour to bring men together: and by that he means, to encourage friendship and understanding among the common peoples across the globe. He told listeners in the United States that there could be no better way to start than to send young Americans—this century's most

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favoured sons—to work and play among the people of East London. General Dwight Eisenhower, with his genius for personal relations, was quick to see the value of social service of this kind and became Chairman of the Sponsoring Body.

Tubby's return to Canada and the States in 1949 was for the sole purpose of recruiting Volunteers to toil in the "Cockneys' Kingdom." By a happy chance McGill University was celebrating the centenary of the birth of Sir William Osler, famed Canadian surgeon and teacher, and it was thereupon decided (by Tubby, his companion Humphrey Whitbread and the Principal of McGill) that recruits from Canadian Universities should bear the name of "Sir William Osler Volunteers," in honour of their distinguished compatriot. Thus, the latest manoeuvre of Toc H to meet the needs of a new post-war generation became officially known as the "Winant-Osler Volunteers," a title designed to evoke the most generous sentiments of Americans and Canadians as it perpetuated the memory of two great souls whose largeness of heart scorned national barriers and the selfishness of little men.

The first team of Volunteers reached England in the summer of '48. They were a breezy crowd, agents of laughter and goodwill from a young land that had not known the austerity that had pinched and dimmed the lives of so many of the people among whom they had come to live for a few short weeks. There were twenty-seven of them, resourceful and devoted; not only did they teach the young East Enders handicrafts and games, serve two Settlements, five Boys' Clubs and one local parish other than All Hallows, but they paid all their own expenses. Their cheerfulness was rather like a sea-breeze sweeping unexpectedly through musty, ill-ventilated alleys and Club Leaders and Social Workers straightened their shoulders with the tonic that had been discharged among them. They brought hope, and hope confers courage. It was decided that every effort must be made to carry on the experiment for ten years. The Rev. Allen F. Kremer, Episcopal Chaplain to the University of Pennsylvania, organised the Volunteers for the following year, 1949, but such was the enthusiasm of those who had worked as Volunteers in East and South London that a steady supply of recruits over the next few years is assured from such leading universities and colleges as Harvard, Yale, Princeton, the

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University of Pennsylvania, Wellesley and others. In this complicated century in which ideals are so often inverted and nightmares commonplace, the problems of East London are really a challenge to youth and its idealism: young Americans, it seems, do not lack ideals and they seldom shirk a challenge.

The total number of Volunteers (minimum age 18 for men and women) has risen steadily and with the increase of numbers has also come the widening of activities. Settlements, Clubs, Camps, Health Centres, in fact the entire compass of many an East End child's life is touched one way or another by these young Americans and Canadians. The average Cockney is a proud and, in many ways, a sensitive soul, quick to resent patronage, but the Americans and Canadians, being what they are, are indifferent to local "class distinctions" and, as a consequence, uniquely qualified to approach the Cockney with his pride and prejudice. They live, work and play together as human beings, not as members of this "class" or that "country."

However, the six weeks' visit of the Volunteers is not all work. The final fortnight is arranged to give a more expansive view of life in Britain. A variety of visits is possible: to Buckingham Palace for the Royal Garden Parties, to Oxford University, the Tower, the Mint, the Houses of Parliament, Marlborough House, Canterbury Cathedral, Winston Churchill's Chartwell Farms and Culzean Castle. And then at the headquarters at Trinity Square they have the opportunity to "swap" experiences, exchange hopes and discuss plans for the future. At least, they can be sure that they will return to their native lands with some knowledge of the English people, and knowledge of another's ways and habits is the indispensable basis of enduring friendship. Winant-Osler Volunteers, inspired by a great though tragic figure, fashioned by the faith and dogged courage of his friend Tubby, may become, in the larger perspective of Western life, a spearhead highly important in the battle for peace.

★ ★ ★

But what of the Guild Church, All Hallows? Its ruins rebuke the conscience of right-minded men, it is true, but rather more specifically they supply dismal evidence of the inability of Christians

to co-ordinate their efforts to restore an ancient symbol of the faith. Souls are more important than churches, we know, but churches perform the useful function of reminding men that God is still alive, and All Hallows has done precisely that for over a thousand years. Men think objectively, for the most part, and it would be difficult for them to imagine a great, international Movement without some visible headquarters or shrine—and the Church on the Hill has been all that, and something else besides, to men scattered all over the earth. Is it to be again? Already the North Aisle, beautifully restored, has been in full use as a church for some time; the South Aisle is now roofed again and work upon the Nave has begun. There is no longer a doubt of the resurrection of All Hallows.

Tubby really is the most unpredictable fellow. When he first peddled the idea of a transplanted Talbot House, with all its dedicated daring, people in London thought him slightly queer, but most of them lived to see Toc H touching with power a dozen branches of the national enterprise and drawing members from at least five continents. They laughed at him in the early '20s when he first shared his dream of an ennobled Tower Hill on which Londoners could stroll through the restored beauty of what had once been a charming pleasance, but when he returned from overseas on Easter Eve 1951 it was to see the vast ugliness of Myer's Warehouse had vanished, and the site was being cleared of the last fragments. The huge extent it occupied is seen in the fine terrace which has now taken its place forever on Great Tower Hill.

The power of Tubby over the years has been derived from two things—his faith, warm and benign, and his talent for placing first things first. "This *one* thing I do . . ." said St. Paul, and P.B.C. has ordered his life by that apostolic canon; singleness of purpose, he early discovered, accomplishes far more than an indiscriminate energy which tried to tackle all things at once. His concern for the rebuilding of All Hallows and the restoration of the Hill to beauty is not therefore the obsession of a tired, ageing man, but another arresting instance of his ability to throw heart, brains, and health into a concentrated effort without neglecting other interests. Since the last War he has crossed the seas several times on Toc H

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business, organised and recruited The Winant and Osler Volunteers, and controlled, personally or remotely, the affairs of an international parish; all of which has confirmed his notion that a headless body is neither handsome nor useful. And Toc H without the Guild Church, from which it has drawn so much thought and inspiration, is almost truncated: anyway, it is not the Toc H that moulded a generation.

Tubby dreams of the resurrected All Hallows, its slender spire pointing heavenward, reminding men that they are touched with the dust of immortality. All around shall be beauty and Cockney laughter where once prevailed the harsh sounds of industry, and Her Majesty's Tower of London, grimly majestic, lies clear again across the Hill, like Justice at the feet of Mercy. Here, men will say in ages to come, is faith. Here Beauty conquered Ugliness, and Courage vanquished Despair. *Sursum Corda*.

He is an old-fashioned man, this Tubby. He believes that dreams come true and has spent his life converting others to his belief. He dreamed of brotherhood in the gathering gloom of the Upper Room in Poperinghe and his dream survived the searching sunlight; he dreamed that lepers could be hopeful and happy, and, strangely, they became so; he dreamed that young Americans could foster friendship and faith amid the ruins of East London and many a Londoner is happier for his dream. Yes, he is a man of dreams who has had the impudence to believe that, under God's hand, he could make them come true. To do this he has been exacting, ruthless, inconsiderate and, occasionally, shortsighted in an impressive kind of way; but, for the most part, he has been overwhelmingly generous, loyal, courageous, daring, and magnificently good humoured. In short, he is a man who walks *with men* while walking still with God, and that is perhaps why the most eloquent tribute ever paid him came from a coloured shoe-shine boy on West Forty-Fourth Street, New York City: "Ah'm mighty glad the Reverend passed this way." Many share his opinion.

THE END

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